

THE ART QUARTERLY

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VOL. I No. 2

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Hans Holbein the Younger: Portrait of a Woman
Detroit, Collection of Edsel B. Ford

A NOTE ON A HOLBEIN PORTRAIT

By PAUL GANZ

THE *Portrait of a Woman* in half length, in the collection of Mr. Edsel B. Ford, Detroit, represents an elderly woman, turned three quarters to the right and sitting on an oak wooden bench adorned with the gothic "linen fold" pattern.¹ She wears a dark blue-greenish dress, edged with a small border of fur, with sleeves of a darker blue surrounded by a muff-like piece of brown fur. Her shirt, made of a transparent, light pinkish lawn revealing the flesh tones and a small black cord beneath, is bordered by a fine design of black thread, and is fastened at the throat by a pearl. The white scarf placed upon the shoulders is folded in double, and is carefully fixed on the bodice by two golden pins. The unusual coif of white linen consists of a cap, closely fitted round the head and doubled with a turned up border, and a flat white bonnet of stouter material fixed in front of the cap by a pin with a pearl on top.

Her quiet attitude seems to express resignation; her blue eyes are looking forward without any interest, and the hands, clasped on her lap, strengthen this impression. The fingers are adorned with five rings, of which one is very fine goldsmith's work enriched by enamelled medallions.

The portrait is painted with great care, demonstrating the master's method of painting in its finest perfection. The modelling of the face and (especially) of the hands attains with its accuracy the reality of nature. The colours are of an enamel-like brilliance, but still are harmoniously keyed with the greenish-blue background.

This portrait was painted in the first part of Holbein's second stay in London, between 1532 and 1534. At that time, as during his first journey to English, he used in his portrait compositions such accessories as benches, curtains, foliage, balustrades, and tables to depict the sitter's surroundings. The picture bears a certain resemblance to the portrait of a lady with a squirrel in the possession of the Marquioness of Cholmondeley,² to the lady sitting on a bench in the Oskar

Reinhart Collection,³ and to the small circular portrait of an elderly woman in the Vienna Gallery, dated 1534.⁴

The companion portrait to the last named, also dated 1534, represents one of Henry VIII's servants bearing the King's red livery adorned with the Royal Initials H. R., which places his wife amongst the people of the Royal household. She wears a costume identical with that of the woman in our portrait and a similar coif and scarf of white material, proving that she also belongs to the middle class, to Holbein's circle of personal friends, his colleagues and the goldsmiths, for whom he worked after 1532.

Considering the beautiful rings, the pearls, and the golden pins, all rendered with a particular care, I believe that she is the wife of one of Holbein's goldsmith-friends, perhaps Hans of Antwerp.⁵ This special coif and scarf have never been used by ladies of rank, but they were still in fashion in 1541 for women of the middle class.⁶

The portrait, painted on an oak panel 9.2 by 7.4 inches, shows in a few places the master's preliminary drawing with pen and ink; it may be that he executed it directly from life, as he knew his sitter well. This excellently preserved portrait well represents Holbein's art at the beginning of his brilliant career as England's most important court painter.

NOTES

¹ Campbell Dodgson, *A new Portrait of an Englishwoman, by Holbein*, *The Burlington Magazine*, September, 1928, p. 105.

² Paul Ganz, *An Unknown Portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger*, *The Burlington Magazine*, September, 1925, p. 113.

³ Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1909, *Illustrated Catalogue of Early English Portraiture*, No. 66, Plate XXLV.

⁴ *Klassiker der Kunst, Hans Holbein, der Jüngere, Des Meisters Gemälde*, 1919, p. 105.

⁵ Three Portraits of Hans of Antwerp are still existing: the most important, dated 1532, in Windsor Castle (*Klassiker der Kunst*, p. 96); the two small circular pictures, *Klassiker der Kunst*, p. 114, and the *Burlington Magazine*, August, 1937, p. 62, Plate II.

⁶ The same flat white bonnet, fixed with a pearl on the white coif, appears in two portrait-drawings now in the collections of the British Museum and of the Royal Library in Windsor Castle. *Catalogue Raisonné des Dessins de Hans Holbein le Jeune*. Nos. 34 and 93. Other reproductions are as follows: *Vasari Society*, 1905-06, part I, No. 31-1; Holmes, R. R., *Portraits of Illustrated Personages*, etc. London, Hanfstängl, Vol. I, p. 10.

A PORTRAIT BUST OF KING ALPHONSO I OF NAPLES

By W. R. VALENTINER

ITALY, like other countries during great art epochs, was open during the Renaissance period to influences from all sides. This may have been partly due to political weakness, but it was certainly advantageous to the development of art and culture. Is the art of Tuscany during the fourteenth century conceivable without the connection with the French Gothic? Can we imagine the development of Lombard art without its relation to German and Burgundian art, or of Venetian art without the influence of the Orient? These influences were in no way harmful to Italian art; on the contrary, the masters of Italian Gothic found their own style while observing the parallel tendencies elsewhere. Only a knowledge of what goes on in other countries, only critical comparison of one's self with the accomplishments of foreign masters can produce the highest in art. On these accomplishments the critic of the artist may be right or wrong; in any event, the occupation with them increases his capacity.

We remember how Ghiberti tells us that many plaster casts were to be found of that great northern sculptor in Italy whom he does not mention, but who most likely was Claus Sluter. He compares him in greatness with the classical Greek masters, but criticises the proportions of his figures, which appeared to him too short. This criticism is an example of the endeavor of the Italian Gothic masters to become acquainted with the accomplishments of their contemporaries abroad while retaining at the same time their own individuality. In spite of the influences from outside, Italian Renaissance art presents as perfectly an integrated picture as that of any great epoch.

The influences were transmitted partly through the importation of art works from the other countries, and partly through Italian artists who traveled outside of Italy, or through foreign artists who came to Italy. Trade and political connections favored this international inter-

course. Innumerable foreign hosts, German and Swiss, French and Spanish, have swept through Italy. Foreign rulers from those countries and even from the Orient paid visits to her cities. Some of them came with their court painters, like Louis XII, who had Jean Perréal make portraits of the beauties of the Milanese court. Artists from all over the world followed the roads of trade and at times the ways of the conqueror. In the north of Italy we find here and there German artists; in the south, Spanish. During the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries we encounter French artists in various parts of Italy, but in the latter part of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Italy gives back to France what it has received, although a few individual painters like Fouquet, Bourdichon, and Guglielmo da Marcillat are active occasionally in Italy. Not unimportant is the infiltration of artists from Dalmatia. It is sufficient to mention the two Laurana, the sculptor Francesco and the architect Luciano, both natives of Zara, which also sent to Italy the remarkable sculptor Giorgio da Sebenico; Giovanni Dalmata from Traù who worked mostly in Rome; or the original Niccolo dell' Arca, whose works are so impressive in the churches of Bologna.¹ They all have in common certain soft Slavonic characteristics, which are wedded in the most pleasing manner to the severe, constructive Italian spirit.

The foreign elements, political as well as artistic, found a particularly fertile ground in the kingdom of Naples, which was governed in the fourteenth century by French and in the fifteenth century by Spanish rulers. The foreign influences were so strong here that it was not easy for the Italian spirit to assert itself successfully. In spite of the ruling classes, these influences would not have been so considerable if the enchanting but enervating climate of South Italy had not been more conducive to reception than to production. But here, too, although comparatively late, the fusion of foreign elements led to the formation of an original and characteristic Neapolitan style.

Ever since the period of the early Gothic, Naples had a special place in the culture of Italy as a foreign court which attracted artistic elements from all over Italy. It became especially important as a seat of humanism and Renaissance art under King Alphonso I (1442-1458). If we wish to understand the most remarkable artistic creation dur-

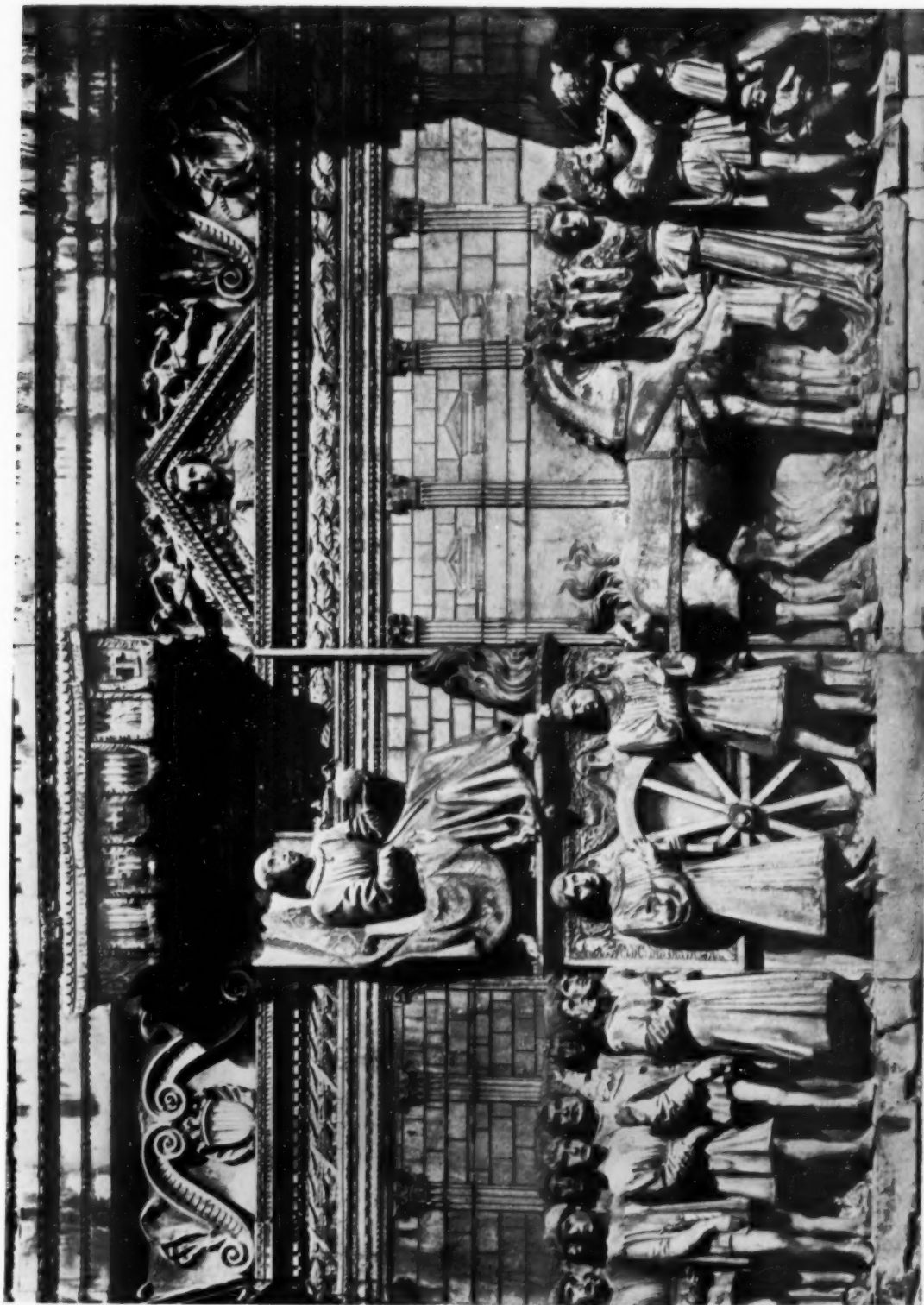


Fig. 1. Center Relief of the Triumphal Arch, Castel Nuovo, Naples

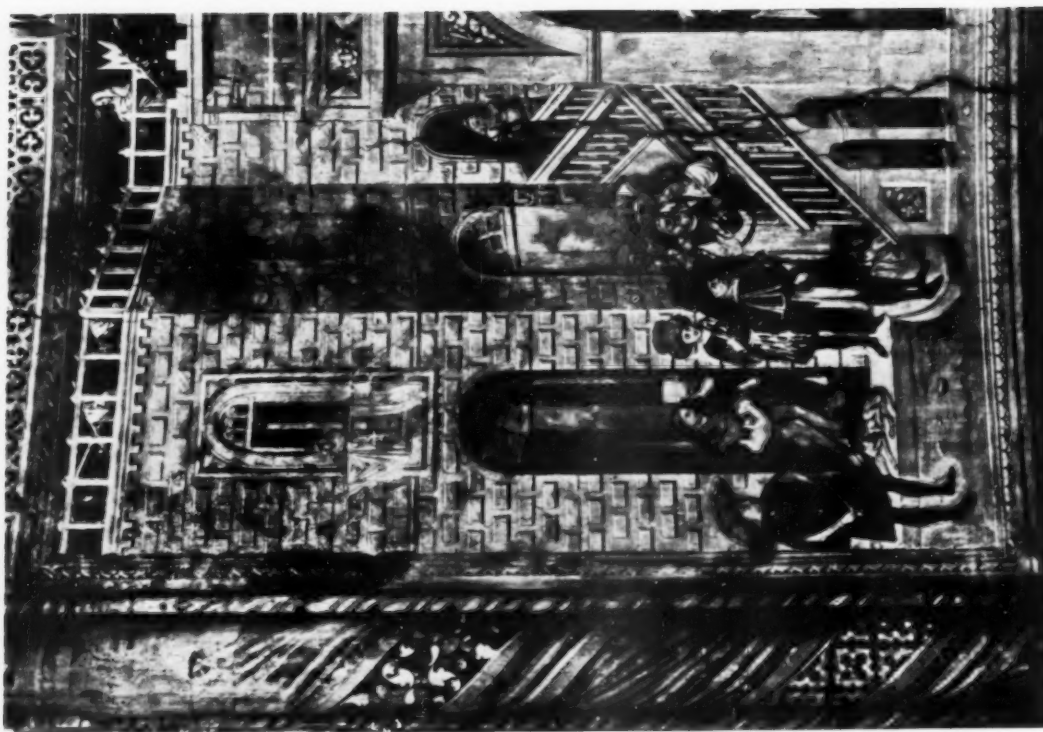


Fig. 3. Leonardo da Besozzo: Birth of the Virgin, Detail
Naples, S. Giovanni a Carbonara



Fig. 2. Leonardo da Besozzo: Coronation of the Virgin, Detail
Naples, S. Giovanni a Carbonara

ing his rule, the reconstruction of the Castel Nuovo and the execution of the triumphal arch (Fig. 1), we must occupy ourselves first of all with the personality of this great ruler of Spanish origin, to whom as a statesman hardly anyone in the Italy of his time could be compared.²

Like the architecture of the Castel Nuovo itself, Alphonso appears to be a mixture of the mediæval and Renaissance spirit, of Spanish and Italian traits.³ From the Middle Ages comes his pleasure in adventure, his personal courage, which especially during his youth bordered on foolhardiness. From the Renaissance come his rare combination of military and diplomatic abilities, his interest in science and art, his belief in the value of classical writers. We may perhaps call Spanish his deep religiosity—for the Italians in general were more skeptical—and the innate sense of dignity that was one of his most pronounced characteristics. Contemporary Italian writers found his piety so astonishing that they report repeatedly how often he went to hear the mass, how carefully he kept all the due fasts, how, on Holy Thursday, he would wash the feet of as many poor men as he had years of life, afterward giving them a meal, how he knew almost the whole Bible by heart and how he industriously studied the commentaries of the fathers of the Church. The bigoted Florentine bookseller, Vespasiano da Bisticci, who liked the King because he was a book collector, gives so one-sided a description of Alphonso's character that one could believe that he did nothing else except pray from morning to night. In fact, however, the King was as strongly attracted by worldly interests as by religion. He enjoyed hunting, war adventures, festivities; he was less liberal to the Church than to his personal friends, among whom we find war heroes and rulers, but most of all, writers and artists.

Alphonso's high idealism and sense of justice were unique in his day. The moral reputation he enjoyed and his detestation of deceit and bloodshed were outstanding exceptions to his period. He can be called the least cruel potentate of the Renaissance, and after he had conquered the Kingdom of Naples, his rule allowed it to enjoy sixteen years of peace. "Triumphator et pacificus" he called himself rightly on one of Pisanello's medals. But only after he had passed through a period of adventures in his youth was he to become the ruler who could make his subjects happy.

The young man of twenty-two years started his reign resolutely in 1416. The Estates of Aragon wanted to give the young king seven advisers, saying that they were pious, just and not subject to passion or corruption, but Alphonso declared he would be glad to abdicate if they could name even one man, instead of seven, who possessed all these qualities—and thus he started to rule entirely by himself. Alphonso was the son of Ferdinand of Castile, who had inherited from his mother the Kingdom of Aragon. He inherited six kingdoms: Castile, Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia and Corsica, and Sicily. But Sardinia and Corsica were claimed by Genoa, and Sicily was likely to be taken over after his father's death by Don Juan, Alphonso's elder brother. The Estates of Catalonia disputed the rule of the young king at home. Goethe's saying, "Was Du ererbt von Deinen Vätern hast, erwirb es, um es zu besitzen!" could be applied to Alphonso's situation.

After the Estates at home had submitted to his rule, he was able to remove his brother from Sicily in a peaceful manner by having him married to the daughter of the King of Navarre. He then began those adventurous voyages by which he hoped to give Aragon a dominating position in the Mediterranean.⁴ His fleet was in the beginning quite small, consisting only of twenty-four galleys and six fast sailing galeots, hardly able to stand hard weather. He undertook, however, to conquer Sardinia and Corsica, and ventured to advance in the South to Tunis and in the North to Marseilles. After he had occupied Sicily, he finally conquered Naples. Years had then gone by with changing luck, which often brought him to the brink of disaster.

Sardinia had been conquered easily, but Corsica, where Alphonso was to suffer his first defeat, was another matter. This passionate people, living in the mountains and delighting in battle, could not be subjected by force or persuasion. Even in those days the women fought bravely side by side with the men, just as we hear later of Napoleon's mother. When the king promised the starving inhabitants of Bonifazio safe conduct if they would surrender, they insulted him by sending him in mockery cheese made out of women's milk. After his fleet had been partially burned by the Corsicans, Alphonso was forced to raise the siege.

He had already received in Sardinia a message from the intriguing

and love-crazy Queen Joan II, who had ruled Naples since the death of her brother Ladislaus in 1414. She had designated Louis III of Anjou as her successor, but became involved in a fight with his followers and now promised Alphonso to adopt him if he would help her. Alphonso saw the possibilities of obtaining control over Southern Italy, which he could not claim by any right of inheritance. It might serve as a base for ruling the Mediterranean, a greater aim than the possession of Corsica. He may have had the idea of a world power centered in Italy, an idea which had been the vision of the Roman Emperors, the German Emperors of the Middle Ages and of Robert the Wise of Naples, who ruled one hundred years before Alphonso, an idea which has been revived by the present ruler of Italy.

Alphonso proceeded with both great care and audacity. He sailed with his fleet to Sicily where he stayed through the winter until the spring of 1421, when he went to Ischia, the island in the Gulf of Naples. He drove Louis III and his famous condottiere Sforza into the interior of the country and entered Naples on July 7 of the same year. But this first occupation of Naples was not to last long. Ser Gianni Carraciolo, Joan's favorite (his funeral chapel contains the finest Gothic mural paintings in Naples) believed that he had lost the Queen's favor through Alphonso. The king had the noble intriguer arrested, but was magnanimous and unwise enough to set him free at Joan's request. The Queen did not find in Alphonso the lover she was always looking for and turned again to Louis III, whom she adopted instead of Alphonso. Alphonso lost more and more support among the high nobility of the kingdom; his troops were pushed back, and when he had to go home to Spain in order to settle affairs there, it very soon became obvious that he would be obliged to give up Naples, at least temporarily.

But Alphonso stuck to the once conceived plan, although a decade elapsed before he could deal with Italian matters again. Around 1435 his adversaries were fast disappearing from the Neapolitan scene. Ser Gianni was murdered with the knowledge of the Queen in 1432; Louis III died in 1434 and bequeathed his claims to his brother René of Anjou, Duke of Lorraine; Joan died in 1435, after she had appointed René as her successor. Alphonso finally reconquered Naples

in June, 1442, after long and extended fighting with René's followers and with René himself, who defended Naples for a number of years (1438-42). Alphonso made his pompous entry into the city in the following year, an entry which he caused to be commemorated ten years later in the marble arch of Castel Nuovo. It is quite understandable that Alphonso clung passionately to the possession of this country, for which he spent the best years of his life in battle. He was not to leave Italy before his death in 1458.

In order that some concept of Alphonso's heroic and fantastic life can be attained, it is necessary to consult the description of his campaigns from his accession to the final conquest of Naples, written by his court historiographer Bartolomeo Facio in 1456, or the excellent and convenient work on the history of Naples which the German romantic poet, Count Platen, wrote in 1834. Alphonso did not hesitate a moment while in danger to risk his life for his men; he was the first to jump on the hostile galley or to climb the walls of the besieged city; through quick action he saved his troops more than once from certain destruction. The honorable treatment which he granted to the enemy, the protection which he accorded to women and children of the conquered city and the discipline which he kept among his soldiers, make him a true representative of mediaeval chivalry. He used to say that he was not proud of being victorious, but of the fact that he knew how to spare the vanquished, because the first was a matter of luck, the second always a matter of his own merit.

When he did not succeed in a campaign, he consoled himself like a mediaeval hero with the idea of honor and glory. He did so for instance on his adventurous trip to Tunis, where he struck up a friendship with the Sultan, whose representative was to follow him in his triumphal entry into Naples and there to be commemorated in reliefs at Castel Nuovo. Few princes of his time suffered so many defeats as Alphonso did in the beginning. He proved his greatness and firmness especially in times of stress, and finally succeeded through stubbornness and patience. Here he can be compared with Frederick the Great, who also showed a similar inclination towards a practical philosophy of life.

The fact that in Naples he was fighting René of Anjou, a man



*Fig. 4. Mino da Fiesole: King Alphonso I
Paris, Louvre*



Fig. 5. Mino da Fiesole: Aurelius Caesar Augustus
Florence, Museo Nazionale



Fig. 6. Mino da Fiesole: Roman Emperor (Caesar?)
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

not inferior to him in chivalry and one who shared his interests in poetry and art, makes the history of this campaign especially attractive. But René's character and heroism cannot be compared with that of Alphonso. Alphonso once accepted René's challenge for a duel and appeared punctually, but René did not come. Alphonso had, if any one had, the right to choose as his emblem the "*sedia pericolosa*", that chair which was reserved for the legendary heroes of King Arthur's Round Table, a chair from which flames rise that yield only to the true and deserving hero. We find this emblem a number of times among the decorations of the triumphal arch at Castel Nuovo. It is most visible on the triumphal car itself where we see an enormous flame rising at the enthroned emperor's feet (Fig. 1).

Mediaeval and classical, Christian and Pagan ideas are strangely united in Alphonso's conceptions, as can also be gathered from his literary and artistic interests. His enthusiasm for classical authors linked him especially with Italian culture. He took as his pattern not only military heroes like Alexander and Caesar, but still more philosophers like Plato and Seneca. George of Trebizond, a Greek humanist, translated Aristotle for him; Xenophon's "*Cyropaedia*" was done by Poggio, the Florentine Secretary of State; Lorenzo Valla translated Herodotus and Thucydides; Filelfo did Plutarch's "*Lives*". No day passed without something being read to him; he spent many sleepless nights studying books, of which he usually had one under his pillow. An open book is one of his emblems, occurring a number of times on the triumphal arch at Castel Nuovo. He meant by this that books should not be looked at only, but opened and read.

A pleasant story of his eagerness to read has been preserved. Once, when Alphonso wanted a book, his librarian had gone away, locking up the library. Alphonso took a crowbar and broke the lock, and when one of his courtiers came along and scolded him for not getting someone else to do the job, Alphonso answered, "Even kings have received hands from God to work with." The soldiers of his army, after conquering a city, looked especially for books which they brought to the King, since they knew how much he was interested in them.

Many ambassadors at Alphonso's court were astonished at the King's

remarkable memory and his ability to cite classical authors, but much more at the wisdom which could be found in his own sayings. Of them many have been preserved, but it suffices to mention only a few: Rich men without education are golden sheep; a court without scholars is like a night without stars; flatterers are like wolves who tickle the donkey before they kill it; a marriage would be happy if the wife were blind and the husband deaf; madness and voluptuousness are the children of drunkenness; a man's soul, derived from eternity, cannot find peace until it returns to that place from which it came; dignity should be estimated higher than victories.

Alphonso tried to communicate this high conception of dignity, which distinguished him so much, to Ferrante, his illegitimate son, whom he designated over the heads of other claimants as his successor because he noticed his intelligence. Ferrante ruled, indeed, with great ability over Alphonso's kingdom for almost forty years (1458-1494). But the magnanimity and generosity, the nobility and dignity which had distinguished his father, turned with Ferrante to the opposite. He was wily in his malice and took advantage of his followers and even killed them when they became too powerful. When he felt alarmed for his own security he did not shrink from torture or murder; and he soon forgot Alphonso's admonition to abstain from that cruelty which had always been detested by his family. What a contrast between Alphonso's clear-cut and noble face and Ferrante's cunning, grinning and greasy expression we can observe in Guido Mazzoni's bust in the Neapolitan Museum or, even better, in that little known one made by Laurana which is hidden above the entrance of the Palazzo Scorciatis in Naples.

A number of reports have been preserved of the impression which Alphonso's natural dignity made on his contemporaries. When the Genoese captured him in a victorious sea battle, they were so fascinated by his unapproachable attitude that they treated him with great submission. When he was extradited by them to Filippo Maria Visconti, the Duke of Milan, this suspicious and shy tyrant was so taken by the free and independent appearance of his prisoner, and by his brilliant conversation, that he not only set him free but also looked up to him all his life with reverence.



*Fig. 7. Francesco Laurana (?): Alphonso I of Naples
Detroit Institute of Arts*



Fig. 8. Bust of Alphonso (Fig. 7), Profile

Alphonso even preserved his monarchical dignity in less important moments. When a soldier once stopped him on the streets of Naples by holding the reins of his horse, and when he did not let him go until he had poured curses on the King, Alphonso took no notice of the man. He remained seated without making a move, then continued his ride as if nothing had occurred. It may be imagined what would have happened to the soldier under Ferrante's reign.

This dignity never prevented Alphonso from being helpful. Once when he was riding ahead of his followers all alone, as he liked to do, he observed a poor peasant whose donkey had tripped and was lying in the mud. He at once jumped off his horse, took hold of the donkey's head and lifted it out with the help of the peasant who seized the tail. The followers hurried to their King and cleaned him, while the poor peasant in fright threw himself before the King, whom he had not recognized.

The biography of this noble monarch, on whom posterity has conferred the title "magnanimous", is filled with stories of this kind. Once when a courtier tried to give him credit for the fact that he was the son, brother and grandson of a king, Alphonso cited Dante's words, which fit him better than they do anybody else, to the effect that: he only is great who shines with his own light:

"Che sol grande e colui chi per se splende."

II.

Alphonso's thought, like that of many of his contemporaries who tried to imitate the heroes of antiquity, dwelled to a large extent on the idea of posthumous fame. It is, therefore, quite understandable that he wished to see himself immortalized in works of literature and art. Vespasiano da Bisticci tells us how abundantly Alphonso rewarded those authors who described his life. We can assume the same about the other artists who glorified him in paintings and sculptures. An impressive number of his portraits has been preserved, most of them naturally showing us only his face. We find but two pictures showing his whole figure: the first in one of Leonardo da Besozzo's frescoes and the second in the triumphal procession at Castel Nuovo.⁵ In addition we might mention the short description of his appearance given by Aeneas Silvius, who met Alphonso in 1451.⁶ This reference

tells us that he was of medium height and delicate frame, that he had a pale but ingratiating face, that he had a bent nose, penetrating eyes and black hair.

The two portraits in the frescoes by Leonardo da Besozzo (about 1445) have not yet received any attention. They are located in Ser Gianni Carracciolo's chapel at S. Giovanni a Carbonara; one of them, in the *Birth of the Virgin*, gives a full length portrait of Alphonso (Fig. 3); the other one gives a half length of the King on a larger scale; here he is wearing his favored black coat of brocade and attending the Coronation of the Virgin (Fig. 2).⁷ Both pictures apparently present a compliment to King Alphonso from Troiano, Ser Gianni's son, who took this opportunity when he decorated the chapel in memory of his father. He caused himself to be portrayed in both frescoes beside the King, but at proper distance. We can easily understand why Ser Gianni's son should try to gain Alphonso's favor since his father had been so hostile to the King in his lifetime.

Otherwise we have only one portrait of Alphonso in painting. This is an unimportant profile in the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris, which was done in Colantonio's style probably by an Hispano-Neapolitan painter around 1445.⁸ The sculptures, however, are more numerous, for it seems that Alphonso had a special interest in plastic art. So we find a bust of him in the *Hofmuseum* at Vienna which originated between 1445 and 1450 and which has often been reproduced. A rather mechanically executed work, it was ascribed for a long time to a certain Domenico da Montemignano whose name was read in two documents, in 1455 and 1456, and to whom we shall soon return. Dr. Planiscig, however, has correctly pointed out⁹ that this bust is not identical with the one mentioned in these documents, since the age of the King represented in it makes it necessary to assume an execution earlier than 1455. Dr. Planiscig was able to ascribe convincingly to this artist another bust of similar hard and lifeless style, which is in a French private collection.

At the end of the forties we find the three masterly medals and portrait drawings done by Pisanello in 1448 and 1449.¹⁰ Hardly any other artist has done so much justice to the personality of the King as this great master from Verona (Figs. 9 and 15). It is quite possible

that he accompanied Alphonso during his campaigns in Tuscany and Lombardy, where the King stayed almost exclusively during the years 1448 and 1449.¹¹ The King was accustomed, as we know, to take his court artists with him on his campaigns, and during this insignificant campaign in Upper Italy he had ample opportunity to go hunting, an occupation with which we see him busy in some of these representations. We hear how the King, during the siege of Piombino in his campaign against Florence, requested the Florentines to permit the passage of his hunters, and how Neri Capponi, the leader of the Florentines, answered that now was not the time to shoot partridges. Pisanello received a high salary and seems to have been commissioned to design the triumphal arch at Castel Nuovo, his sketch for which has been preserved.¹² The triumphal arch, however, was carried out not in Pisanello's Venetian Gothic but in Renaissance style, by Pietro da Milano, who was called from Ragusa in 1452. Pisanello had probably already left Naples around 1450.

From the fifties we have to deal with only two marble sculptures of the King, one of which has not been properly classified, while the other is still unpublished. We will start with the first one which can be dated more accurately.

This is the excellent relief portrait which shows the King at an advanced age and which is exhibited in the Louvre as of the "Neapolitan School" (Fig. 4). Planiscig¹³ recognized the importance of this work and remarks "that it seems to stand outside of the Neapolitan group and to be connected in many respects with Florence." It is not very difficult to determine the master who produced it. In my opinion it could have been no one but Mino da Fiesole. It has the same strength of expression, the same precision of drawing and the same technique of clearly graduating the relief towards the background which we find in other male portraits by this master, who, in his younger years especially, produced distinguished portraits of important leading contemporary figures. The portrait in question obviously belongs to this early period of his work.

It has the same composition as the Augustus relief in the Bargello (Fig. 5) of which we have a counterpart in the Quincy Shaw Collection in the Boston Museum (Fig. 6). These two reliefs still show

clearly Desiderio's influence, whose disciple Mino was, according to Vasari. The circular arrangement of the wrap in classical style is similar, but the drapery is already sharply folded, with those corners at obtuse angles which are so characteristic of Mino. In contrast to Mino's later works, the various planes of the face are less sharply set off one against the other, and the hair has been gathered in single curls in a less compact way. We also observe that just as on the relief of Alphonso, the single tufts of hair of the occiput stand out against the empty ground of the relief. The high-relief is also typical of Mino—Alphonso's shoulder sticks out much farther than the photograph indicates. Dr. Bode remarks correctly that his reliefs are more like busts cut in half. Just as characteristic of Mino are: the deep cavities of the ear and of the chain, the fact that the robe overlaps the frame, and the projecting semicircular base which occurs in many of his busts and reliefs.

But how did Mino come to Naples? We know that already as a young man the artist enjoyed quite a reputation as a portrait sculptor. The first dated work is the excellent portrait bust of Niccolo Strozzi which, according to the inscription inside, he executed in 1454 in Rome when he was only twenty-three years old. It can be assumed as quite probable that he came to Naples from Rome with recommendations from Strozzi, who, after his banishment from Florence, had opened a branch bank in Naples and had become Alphonso's banker.

We possess, however, in my opinion, strong documentary evidence of Mino's activities in Naples. It seems to me highly probable that our Mino is identical with the so-called Domenico da Montemignano. This person leads a shadowy existence in the literature of art¹⁴ and he has even a biography in Thieme-Becker's dictionary. First of all, it appears suspicious that nothing is known about this artist from Tuscany who received a handsome commission for making a portrait of the King; while we have definite knowledge from the work they did about the other sculptors at the King's court. Further, it is certainly no accident that Montemignano is a small place located near Poppi in the Casentino which, according to other documents, was Mino's home town. It had been in the possession of the Count of Poppi and later on it was ceded together with Poppi to Florence after the battle

of Anghiari. The Spanish secretary who wrote the payroll for the Italian artists at the Neapolitan court seems to have encountered serious difficulties in spelling the artist's name and especially his place of origin; we quite understand why practical considerations in later years caused Mino to substitute the name of the larger Poppi for the small Montemignano. Also the secretary does not seem to have been familiar with his first name. He first spells it "Minco" and later writes "Minico." Montemignano is first spelled "Montemjnyayo" and later "Montemjnyano." Those who are familiar with the distortions of names in Neapolitan documents of that period can feel only surprise that Mino's own name and that of his native town did not take on stranger forms.

As regards the King's age in the Louvre relief, it fits in very well with the date 1455, the year in which it can be assumed to have originated. Alphonso was then sixty-one years old. He appears to be of the same age on the main relief of the triumphal arch (Fig. 1).

It has been assumed hitherto that the commission given to the artist from Montemignano concerned a portrait bust. The documents, however, speak only of "sculpturing the King's head from the breast upwards." This can refer to a relief just as well as to a bust. It has been assumed equally incorrectly that the second work done by the same artist according to the same documents was a statue or statuette of John the Baptist. In both cases the documents only speak of an "ymage" of the Baptist which the artist had to work over after it had been done by one of his apprentices.

Since we know now that this artist was Mino da Fiesole, we can well imagine how this John the Baptist was represented. It was very likely one of the several busts of the young St. John which have been preserved (Louvre; Metropolitan Museum, Altman Collection; Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris; Lyon). They are uneven in execution and for this reason one or the other has been wrongly doubted. From the documents we learn that already in his younger years Mino worked with assistants, which explains to us why some of his works are so superficial in execution. Assistants' work has always been assumed for his later period. Among the busts of St. John, the one in the Louvre most deserves to be considered in connection with the

documents of 1455; this still shows clear relations with Desiderio and it can hardly have originated later than the second half of the fifties.

If the interpretation of the first document of July 20, 1455, is correct, according to which Mino had already finished both sculptures by that date,¹⁵ we are free to suppose that he made the bust of Astorgio Manfredi, the ruler of Faenza (1448-1468), during the second half of that year; this bust is now in the Widener Collection in Philadelphia and is dated 1455. It was probably made in Faenza, although we cannot be sure where Astorgio was living just then. We can conclude that he had entered into relations with King Alphonso from the fact that he fought together with Piccinino, who later joined Alphonso's party at the battle of Anghiari against the Florentines. It was in 1440, then, that Francesco de Battifolle, the Count of Poppi, about whose territory the fight mainly centered and on whose support Piccinino relied, lost his domains to Florence, although his ancestors, the Counts of Guidi, had for centuries possessed an independent and powerful position in Tuscany. Mino was a boy of nine years when this decisive fight about his native land took place. It can be well understood that he was highly interested in making the sculpture of Astorgio Manfredi who had fought so bravely for the Count of Poppi and who had saved Piccinino's army from complete defeat. As early as the following year we find Mino busy as usual, but now in Florence, where he made a portrait bust of the apothecary Alexo di Luca (now in the Berlin Museum); then follow the busts of Piero and Giovanni di Medici, the sons of Cosimo Medici, which are classed among his most excellent and best known works (both in the Museo Nazionale, Florence).¹⁶

The bust of Alphonso which has been recently acquired by the Museum at Detroit (Figs. 7 and 8) belongs chronologically between Pisanello's medal portraits of 1449 and Mino's marble relief of 1455. This bust was for forty years in Richard Mortimer's collection in Tuxedo Park, N. J., where it had been acquired from a Florentine dealer.¹⁷ It is not very difficult to prove that it represents Alphonso if we compare it with other portraits which we have of him (Fig. 9). It is less easy to show that it is the work of Francesco Laurana, to whom I would ascribe it.

Laurana (about 1430-1502), a native of Zara in Dalmatia, was an artist who can be proved to have been active in Naples, Sicily and France. He is especially famous for his portrait busts of young princesses such as we find in the collections of the Berlin Museum, in the Museo Nazionale in Florence, and in the American collections of Rockefeller, Mellon and Frick.¹⁸ His male busts are rarer. We know thus far only of two, the bust of a boy in Palermo (Fig. 10) which has been generally ascribed to him, and the previously mentioned portrait bust of Ferrante, which is located in an inaccessible place. The female busts, and that of Ferrante, fall into the later and mature period of the artist, fifteen to twenty years after the Detroit bust.

Laurana came to Naples as a young man in order to collaborate on the triumphal arch. Born hardly before 1430, he was about twenty-two years old when he started his work there. Documents disprove that he took over the management of the triumphal arch, as Summonte claimed eighty years later in his report. The leading master was Pietro da Milano, a man of the generation preceding.¹⁹ We therefore cannot expect to find too much of Laurana's personal style in the triumphal arch. The relief which shows Alphonso marching off to war and which is located in the right soffit of the lower part of the arch is generally and quite convincingly ascribed to him. It is the work of a beginner who was not very gifted in dramatic composition, a characteristic which can be clearly seen in Laurana's later productions, especially in his last works done at Avignon. The artist, on the other hand, must have possessed from the beginning a great talent for portraiture. Excellent, too, are the medals which he made during his stay in France, after he had left Naples. Summonte also praises his masterly marble portrait of Alphonso. This sculpture, which some scholars recognize in the sitting portrait of the triumphal relief must have originated between 1452, the year of Laurana's arrival in Naples, and 1458 the year of Alphonso's death. It seems not impossible to us that this is the portrait bust in the Detroit Museum, as it is not very likely that Summonte, who describes the whole triumphal arch as Laurana's work, would have repeated himself in the next sentence by attributing a detail of it to the sculptor.

Of decisive importance, however, is the stylistic question of

whether we can recognize Laurana's hand in it. Even the external contours support such an assumption. If we compare the *Bust of a Boy* in Palermo (Fig. 10), which is chronologically the closest bust to ours and which originated about ten years later, we can see a similar proportion between head and bust and the termination in a quarter circle. Subsequently, Laurana ceased to round off the lower border of his busts and substituted instead a broad pedestal-profile which gives a straight termination below. The lower termination is slightly curved and is without a pedestal on the female busts in Palermo and in the Musée Jacquemart-André, which obviously belong to the first Sicilian period. We also find on the medals made in France the same curved termination at the bottom as in our bust.

It is characteristic of Laurana to simplify strongly and to round off the forms. As L. Venturi has shown,²⁰ he arrives at an abstract style of round geometric forms that contrast strongly with the much more faithful imitation of nature in the Florentines. This tendency is already visible in our bust, although it has not yet matured to the developed style of his accepted female busts. If we compare the back of Alphonso's bust with Battista Sforza's in the Museo Nazionale which originated about twenty years later in 1474 (Figs. 11 and 12), we observe the same preference for soft, round forms and shallow curves. The profiles of the neck and of the shoulder are almost alike. The steel bands in Alphonso's armor have already the same curve as the neckline of Battista Sforza's robe.

Laurana's clever treatment of surfaces in his busts, especially in the face, is very typical and has always been admired. He achieves a blurred, atmospheric effect which we do not find in the work of any other sculptor of his time. He increases this effect by leaving unworked certain parts of the bust, such as the veil or the cloth at the shoulders or the base, so that the difference between the rough parts of the marble and the highly finished surface of the face becomes quite clear. The same effect has been achieved in the bust of Alphonso, the hair of which remained rough while the face has been smoothed with the greatest care.

It has been asked how Laurana arrived at this clever and delicately pictorial treatment of the surface. I think it can be most easily

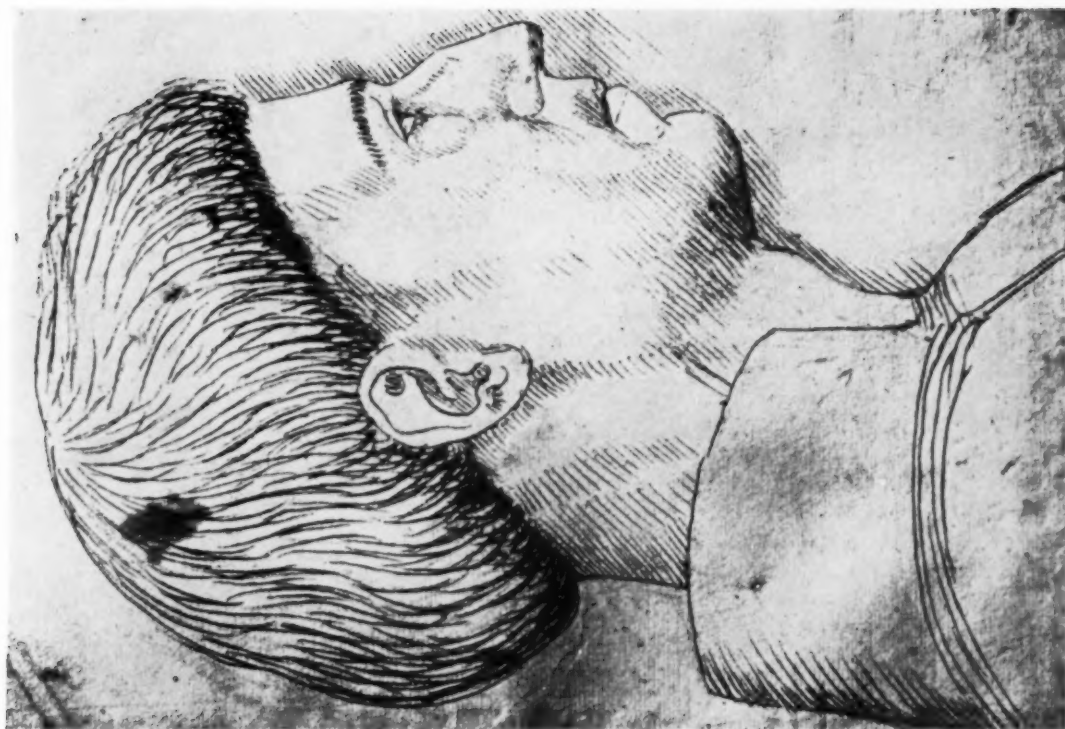


Fig. 9. Pisanello: Portrait Study of Alphonso I.
Paris, Louvre



Fig. 10. Francesco Laurana: Portrait Bust of a Boy.
Palermo, Museo Nazionale

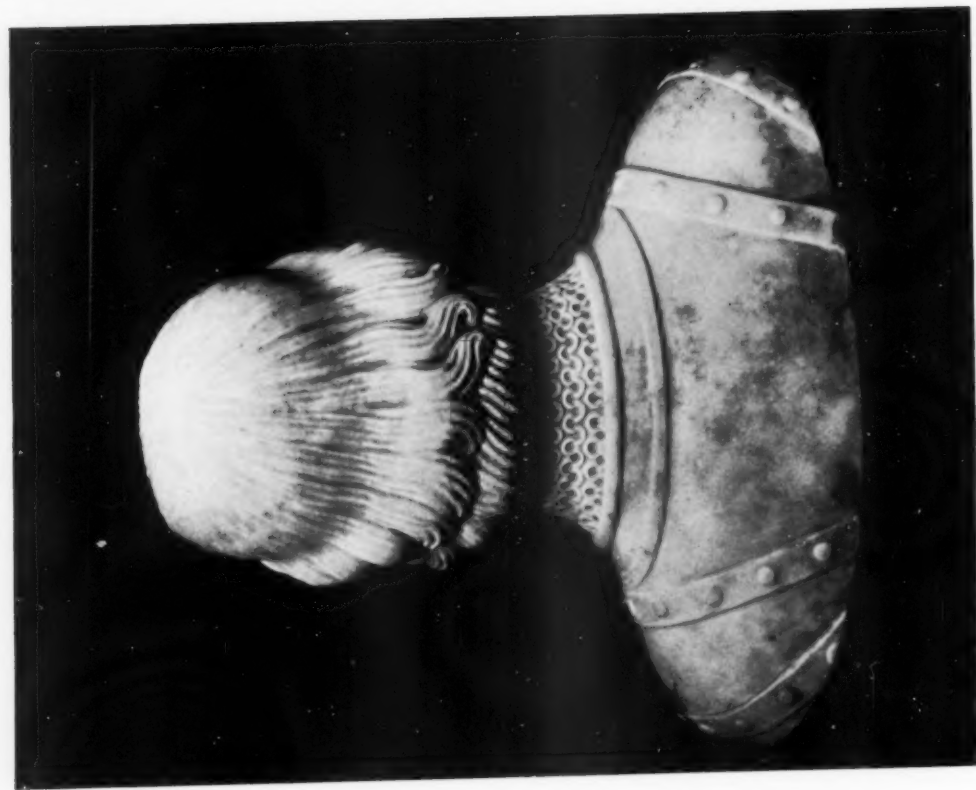
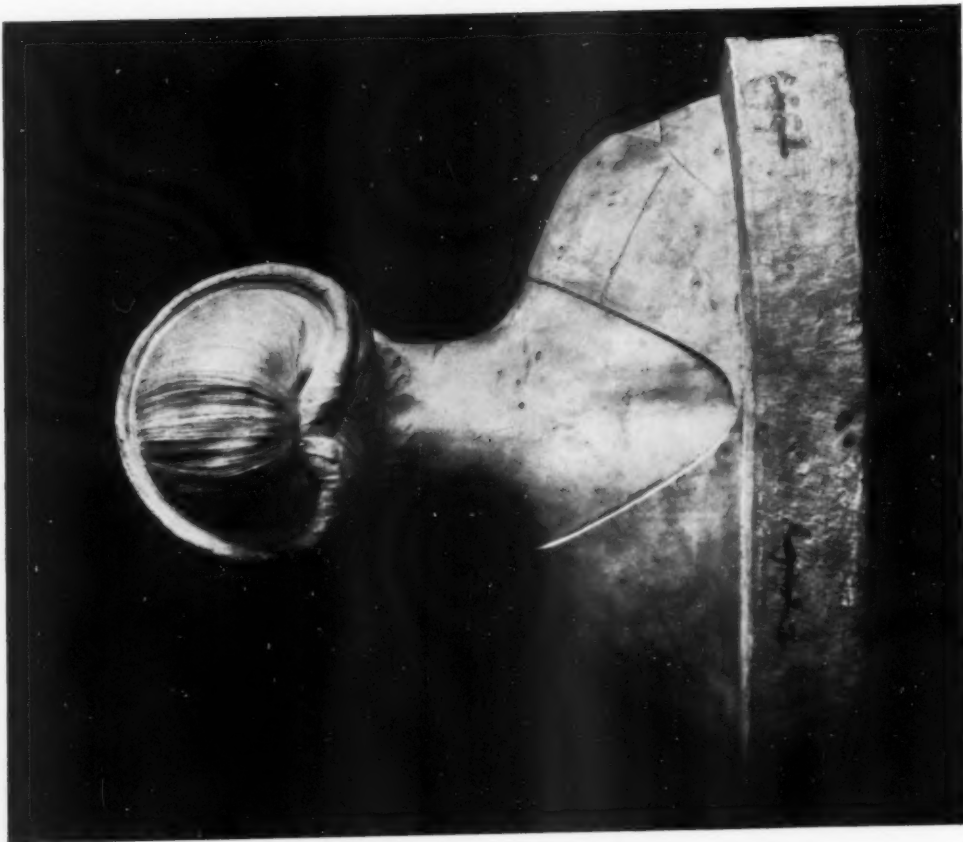


Fig. 11. Bust of Alphonso (Fig. 7), Rear View



*Fig. 12. Francesco Laurana: Bust of Battista Sforza.
Florence, Museo Nazionale*

explained through the study of Roman busts of the Augustan period. The most impressive antiques in Laurana's native city of Zara are two statues of Augustus and Tiberius which were found in Nona, a city not far from Zara. The masterly technical treatment of the faces of these two works reminds us immediately of Laurana.

Moreover the preference for soft, indefinite contours is a Slavic peculiarity which we observe for instance in Giovanni Dalmata and Niccolo dell' Arca. The rendering of the mouth with its undefinable contour is especially characteristic of the bust of Alphonso; we find a similar technique in the *Bust of a Boy* or the busts of girls in Palermo and Paris; we also can recognize the master of the subsequent female busts in the transitions from the hollow of the eyes to the forehead and cheeks. We might also call the lack of individuality in Laurana's busts a Slavic trait. Although he is rightly famous for his portrait busts, it has long been known that their similarity could only have been highly superficial. Their quality consists of a certain harmony of the proportions, an undefinable, mystical charm of expression and an unequalled art of treating marble. Their idealizing tendency is so strong that it has been often believed that the various busts of girls and the masks always represent the same personality, although nearly all of them undoubtedly portray different models.

We observe in the bust of Alphonso the same lack of individuality, which blurs the indications of age; its idealizing character in the classical sense is obvious enough. But for the deep wrinkles in the cheeks, the sunken temples and the double chin, we might think the King was in the forties instead of nearing the end of the fifties. If the bust is by Laurana, it must have originated around 1453, that is to say, two years earlier than Mino's relief and four years after Pisanello's medallions.

Laurana's contributions to the triumphal arch offer only a small number of points for comparison. The figures in the soffit relief are so covered up by armor and helmets, that neither the faces nor the hair can be easily compared. Apart from the roundness of the forms which is used in both instances, especially in the frieze of the *putti*, we can observe the strange and extraordinary formation of the hair in the treatment of the lion's mane (Fig. 13). The same kind of curls,

conventionalized, long-drawn out, separated from one another and rolled towards the top, that we find in the mane of the lion, are displayed in the thick hair of the King. We can also see the tendency towards conventionalization in the hair of the *putti* (Fig. 14). Moreover, the formation of 'the *puttis*' eyes furnishes a good basis of comparison. They are just as much related to those of the *Bust of the Boy* at Palermo as to those of Alphonso. In both cases we see the eyes softly placed in their orbits; and the upper eyelids are clearly drawn, while the lower ones are slightly swollen.

If the bust is, as we believe, the work of Laurana, it is of special importance for our knowledge of this master's development, since it is his earliest known portrait bust. It is, like Mino's relief, the work of a highly gifted sculptor of about twenty-three years of age who was entrusted by Alphonso, almost for the first time in his life, with a great task. This bust, moreover, furnishes a new and important evidence as to the appearance of this extraordinary human personality. It harmonizes strangely in its expression the qualities of energy and kindness, of dignity and intelligence. This intelligence which may be said to be directed towards eternity, expressing itself in the eyes, seems to conquer all bodily weakness. It reminds us of the King's saying: that his belief in the immortality of the soul was founded on his observation that with increasing age the body, indeed, became weaker, but the soul increased in wisdom and harmony.

NOTES

¹ He is said to have been born in Bari, Apulia, but in Bolognese documents he is mentioned several times as Slavonic or a native of Dalmatia (K. Frey, Vasari, *Vite* II, 911, pp. 712-715).

² The most complete treatise on the subject is the book by R. Filangieri, *Castel Nuovo*, Naples, 1934.

³ The following characterization of Alphonso is based upon the contemporary biographies of Bartolommeo Facio, Antonio Beccadelli, Tristano Caracciolo and Vespasiano da Bisticci. Only the last is published in an English translation (*The Vespasiano Memoirs*, New York, 1926, pp. 59-83). The most important one, by Beccadelli, has been translated into German, with the addition of an excellent historical treatise by H. Hefele, Jena, 1925.

⁴ It is not impossible that these adventures of Alphonso are reflected in Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Shakespeare's source has not yet been found, but there might have existed a legendary account of Alphonso. E. K. Chambers (*William Shakespeare, A Study of Facts and Problems*, Oxford, 2 Vols.) points out that a certain Alphonso, King of Naples, had a son, Ferdinand II, who abdicated in 1495. But this Alphonso II and his son were unimportant; they ruled only a short time and did not give rise to any legends. Alphonso I is a much more likely figure. The leading figures in the play are, as is well known, a King "Alonso" of Naples, his son Ferdinand, his old adviser Gonsalo (probably the Spanish version of Gonzales), the legitimate Duke of Milan, his daughter, and the Duke's brother who usurped the throne of Milan. The historical Alphonso was in closest contact with Filippo Maria Visconti, Duke of Milan, a fear-stricken tyrant whose predecessor and brother had been murdered. During the course of his voyages, this Alphonso also reached Tunis, where "Alonso's" daughter in Shakespeare marries the Sultan. Alphonso, moreover, was shipwrecked more than once.

⁵ I am unable to recognize an image of Alphonso in the seated statue published by L. Planiscig, *Bolletino d'Arte*, 1934, p. 293. Against the attribution speaks the fact that the statue comes from a palazzo in Genoa, from whence it was sold by the antique dealer Villa to Boehler of Munich. It is in my opinion a work in the style of Elia Gagini.

⁶ W. Rolfs, *Laurana*, p. 99.

⁷ F. Nicolini, *L'arte napoletana del rinascimento e la lettera di Summonte*, 1925, p. 282.

⁸ Published by A. Venturi, *Storia dell' arte italiana*, VII, p. 121.

⁹ L. Planiscig, *Jahrbuch der Kunstbistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 1934, pp. 65-78.

¹⁰ G. F. Hill, *Medals of the Renaissance*, Oxford, 1920, p. 41.

¹¹ F. T. Perres, *A History of Florence, 1434-1492*, London, 1892, pp. 88-91.

¹² Published by L. Planiscig in *Jahrbuch der staatlichen Kunstsammlungen*, Berlin, 1933, p. 16.

¹³ L. Planiscig, *Jahrbuch der Kunstbistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 1934, p. 69.

¹⁴ C. v. Fabriczy, *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1899, p. 147; W. Rolfs, *Laurana*, 1907, p. 178; L. Planiscig, *Jahrbuch der Kunstbistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 1934, p. 65.

¹⁵ L. Planiscig, loc. cit., p. 65. It would seem, however, strange that an objection by the Neapolitan court was not raised until January 31, 1456, the date of the second document, to the effect that the bust of St. John had not been satisfactorily executed by Mino's assistant. Mino might have been paid early in 1456 in Florence or some other place, if we do not want to assume that he returned to Naples.

¹⁶ F. T. Perres, *A History of Florence, 1434-1492*, London, 1892, pp. 31-39.

¹⁷ Mr. Mortimer told me, as far as I can remember, that Stefano Bardini, from whom he had bought it, had acquired it in Naples.

¹⁸ In questions concerning Laurana, I am in agreement mainly with the researches of W. Bode, A. Venturi, W. Rolfs, F. Burger, F. Schottmüller and others. I do not think that Planiscig has succeeded in his attempt to split Laurana into two personalities, into the artist of the Madonnas and reliefs in Sicily and the reliefs in France on the one side, and that of the busts of young women on the other side.

¹⁹ For these questions, see my article on Andrea dell' Aquila which is to appear in the *Art Bulletin* at a future date.

²⁰ L. Venturi, *Studi sul palazzo ducale di Urbino*, *L'Arte*, 1914, 415-473.



Fig. 14. Francesco Laurana: Frieze from the Triumphal Arch, Detail. Naples



Fig. 13. Francesco Laurana: Detail from relief on the Triumphal Arch, Naples

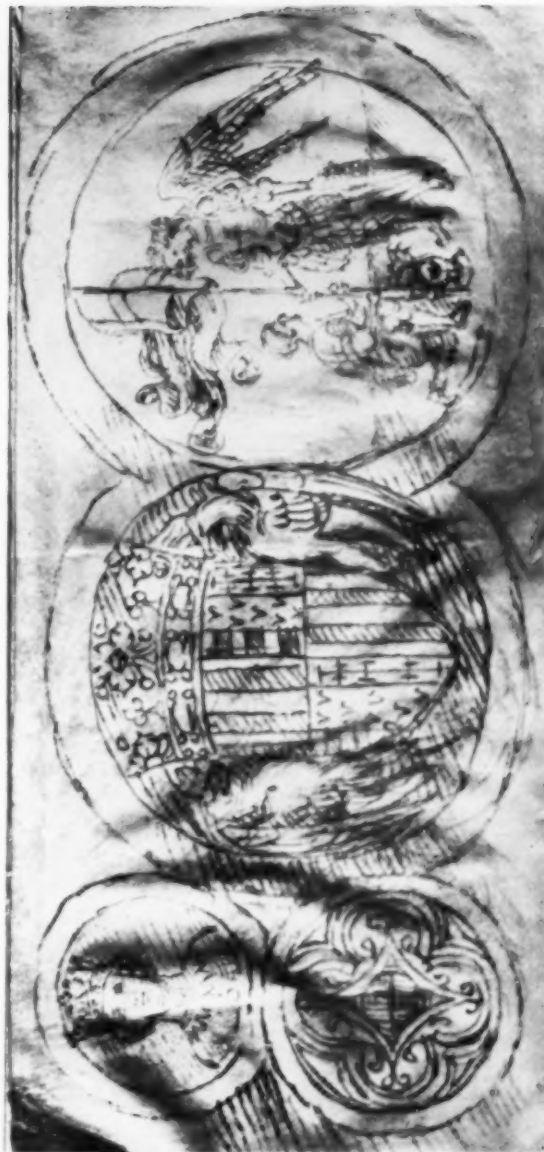


Fig. 15. Pisanello: Sketch for medals with portraits of King Alphonso. Paris, Louvre



*Fig. 1. William Page: Self Portrait
Detroit Institute of Arts*

TWO PORTRAITS BY WILLIAM PAGE

By E. P. RICHARDSON

IN THE two romantic generations of the nineteenth century the strength of American painting went chiefly into landscape and genre, while figure and portrait painting were here, as in Europe, undergoing a period of weakness. Between Trumbull and Vanderlyn at the beginning of the century and Eakins and Sargent at the end, there were only a few figure painters who were felt by their own generation to have achieved fine quality. The chief of these was William Page (1811-1885). In 1905, when Samuel Isham published his *American Painting*, still the most measured judgment on the nineteenth century, he named Page and Inness as the best examples of the deep insight into spiritual things which characterized the romantic generation in contrast to the optimism and shallow grace which characterized the art of the close of the century.¹ Isham is rarely in error in judgments of personality; but the student whose curiosity is aroused by Isham's opinion would find that not only have William Page's pictures, but even his name, completely disappeared.² The few pictures by him in public collections are either inconspicuous or inaccessible, so that the amateur of American art must be excused if he has never heard of William Page.³

Two of his most important paintings, a *Self-Portrait* (Fig. 1), painted in Rome in 1860,⁴ and a *Portrait of Mrs. Page* (Fig. 2), painted in Rome at about the same period,⁵ were given in 1937 to The Detroit Institute of Arts by members of the Page family. These paintings and the considerable number of his pictures in the possession of his son, Mr. George S. Page of Pittsburgh, gave the writer his first opportunity to study Page's achievement, a study which, to be brief, leads me to believe that Isham was correct and that in Page's work is to be found the best of American romantic figure painting.

Page was born in Albany, New York, January 23, 1811, and died in Tottenville, Staten Island, October 1, 1885. In 1820 his parents brought him to New York City, where in 1822 he received a premium

from the American Institute for an India-ink drawing. In spite of this early encouragement, his parents put him at the age of fourteen in the office of Frederic de Peyster to study law. He soon left the law to study painting with James Herring, a portrait painter best known for the illustration (with James Longacre of Philadelphia) of the "National Portrait Gallery" (three volumes, Philadelphia, 1834-1839); but he quickly left Herring to study with Morse at the school of the National Academy. S. F. B. Morse had studied with Allston in London and, although he was most uneven in his own achievement, represented an excellent tradition of color. Allston had gone to the great Venetian colorists for inspiration, in an age when the ideals of most figure painters were Raphael, Correggio and the Bolognese; and both Allston and Page were, each in their generation, the most distinguished colorists in America.

But there was as another side of Page's character, an impulsive, crotchety eccentricity, which led him continually into all kinds of experiments, most of which were unfortunate for his art. His veering, changeable nature showed itself first, when about 1828, he suddenly decided to enter the Presbyterian ministry and spent two years studying at Andover and Amherst. Later he found a permanent spiritual resting place (as did Inness) in the teachings of Swedenborg, but his changeability led him all his life into technical experiments in paint and sudden changes of manner which distressed his friends. In 1830, he returned again to art and painted in Albany (1830) and New York City (1831-c.1843). Sartain⁶ says that his first efforts were not well received and that he turned to mezzotint engraving (c. 1834), which led to an improvement in his color. But from 1835, when he exhibited a *Mother and Child* which occupied the place of honor in the Exhibition of the National Academy, he was recognized as one of the foremost American portrait painters and a colorist of unique power.⁷ The chief work of his first New York period is the full length *Portrait of Governor William L. Marcy* of New York State (1839) painted for the City of New York. (So short is the memory of the American people for those who have served them, that few could today tell who this able statesman was, whose name is borne by the highest peak of the Adirondack Mountains.) Page made of him a portrait that stands out

from the mediocrity of the time both as a painting and as a characterization.

But from the beginning of his career Page was more than a portrait painter. He painted a *Holy Family*,⁸ for which his own wife and children served as models, genre scenes and romantic narrative subjects. While the average painter was content to get a good, solid likeness, Page was thus training himself to meet larger problems of light, color and expression (Fig. 3). Then after working in Boston and other parts of New England (1844-1847) and again in New York (1848-1849) he went at last upon the European journey which was the dream of every artist of the time. He stayed for a time in Florence and Venice, but spent most of the years from 1849 to 1860 in Rome.

The attraction which Rome excited upon generous minds at this time is beyond the comprehension of our age, which is no longer educated on the Roman poets and which long ago learned to look on Paris as the capital of art. But for three hundred and fifty years after the age of Raphael and Michelangelo, Rome was the city of the artist's and traveler's dream. Rome, and to a lesser extent Florence, maintained colonies of American artists. For American sculptors life in Italy offered a practical advantage in its supply of Carrara marble and of skilled stone cutters, which America lacked. But beyond that Rome stood for an ideal of the fullness of life, to which Page's romantic generation was peculiarly susceptible. In Rome at this time were W. W. Story and Crawford, the American sculptors; Gibson, the English sculptor and Leighton, the painter; Charlotte Cushman, the American actress; and many literary visitors, including the Brownings, Hawthorne and James Russell Lowell. If the art which the Roman colony produced seems no longer so great as it once did, one can still gather from *The Marble Faun* or from letters of the time the depth of the American artist's craving for an atmosphere of art and for an old, deep-rooted and mellow civilization, which found satisfaction there.

In Rome Page attained a reputation that was international. One can read in the letters of the Roman colony of the excitement and extravagant praise aroused by his portraits of Robert Browning, of Charlotte Cushman, of Mrs. Crawford, whose husband was just fin-

ishing the pediment of the Capitol in Washington.⁹ An English critic, wrote in 1854, "At the risk of being thought guilty of exaggeration, I declare, after having visited the studio of Mr. Page, that he is undoubtedly the first portrait painter of modern times. I say this emphatically, and let those who doubt it go there and judge for themselves. He has studied the Venetian school of colouring; he has, so to say, identified himself with these painters, particularly Titian, so that his works want but the touch of age . . . to render the imitation perfect." But Page's importance in the development of the portrait was not as a colorist only; he was the first to formulate a new idea of portrait composition in contrast to the neo-baroque formulae of the English school. The two portraits here reproduced show his architectonic composition, which, based upon the ideas of the High Renaissance, was in the 1850's markedly unlike any prevailing type of composition. The English critic clearly felt the novelty of Page's portraits, for he continues: "I could not but institute a passing comparison between the peculiar and almost symmetrical accuracy of this treatment (of the portrait of Mrs. Crawford) with the practice of modern painters, such as Reynolds, Lawrence, Hoppner and Romney, who all more or less indulged in the *dash* style . . . In Lawrence, especially, there is evidence of artistic *trick*. Masses of shadow and half-tint constantly occur, rolled up, so to say, in gleams: and electric touches of light placed in juxtaposition with the principal mass of dark. In the treatment of Page, as of Titian and all the masters of that elevated school, there is both simplicity and breadth, dignity and earnestness, in the execution."¹⁰

In 1860 Page returned to New York to spend the remainder of his life there. He lived for a time near Inness at Eagleswood, N. J., but in 1866 settled at Tottenville, Staten Island. In this final period he painted Grant, Sumner, Farragut and many other national figures of the day. His *Farragut in the Rigging at Mobile Bay* (1870) was purchased by subscription and presented to the Emperor of Russia, who was very popular as the only European ruler to show sympathy with the North during the Civil War. But he was not solely a portrait painter. In Rome he had painted a *Venus* of which Mrs. Browning wrote enthusiastically to Ruskin (there were, in all, three versions of his once famous *Venus of the Shell*), a *Moses on Mount Horeb*, the

Flight into Egypt, and other large, romantic narrative paintings as well as landscapes and scenes of Italian peasant life. His fondness for experiment led him to construct an ideal canon of human proportions, which he published in book form in 1860, and later to do his only piece of sculpture, a head of *Shakespeare* now in Stratford-on-Avon.¹¹

Many reputations of the romantic movement have, of course, since disappeared. This is particularly true of romantic figure painting, for the strength of the romantic movement was its lyric sentiment, not its sense of form. The attempt of the romantic painters to create a monumental narrative art were probably foredoomed. It must be confessed that this is true of Page. His ideal paintings, his narratives and the *Venuses*, have gone into the limbo which has received so much romantic painting. But the genre paintings, the *Holy Families* in which he painted his own family, and the portraits—all the work in fact which he painted from nature—deserves a better fate. It is forgotten, partly because portraits are not greatly valued by today's criticism and because most of his famous portraits are still in private possession,¹² but chiefly because his method of painting caused many of his pictures to darken rapidly. He was an experimenter in technique, and worked, as did most of the best painters of his day, toward an atmospheric style.¹³ His theory of painting flesh, inspired by Titian, was that the most color was to be found in the middle tone of the scale from light to dark, since more light would weaken the color, more dark obscure it. But instead of putting on his colors side by side, as did Monet, he built up his pictures in successive layers of transparent pigment one over another from warm to cool. He seems to have experimented also with various forms of oils¹⁴ and varnishes, which too often have cracked and darkened. From the point of view of style, as well as spirit, it is fitting to place him beside Inness, for they are the two best examples of the American form of Impressionism which developed contemporaneously with the French. Inness, it may be observed, began to develop his atmospheric manner during the years in which Page was his friend and neighbor at Eagleswood and his inspiration may well have come from Page.

The story of Page's portrait of Browning is worth recording in detail, since it illustrates both the contemporary effect of his work and its

rapid decay. "By the way," wrote Mrs. Browning just after her arrival in Rome, to her friend, Mrs. Jameson (Rome, 1853), "Mr. Page's portrait of Miss Cushman is really something wonderful—soul and body together. You can show nothing like it in England, take for granted . . . Critics wonder whether the colour will *stand*. It is a theory of this artist that time does not *tone*, and that Titian's pictures were painted as we see them. The consequence of which is that his (Page's) pictures are undertoned in the first instance, and if they change at all will turn black."¹⁵ Six months later she wrote to Miss Mitford (Rome, 1854), "Page, the American artist, painted a picture of Robert like an Italian and then presented it to me like a prince. It is a wonderful picture, the colouring so absolutely *Venetian* that artists can't (for the most part) keep their temper when they look at it, and the breadth of the likeness is literal. Mr. Page has *secrets* in the art—certainly nobody else paints like him—and his nature, I must say, is equal to his genius and worthy of it."¹⁶ But within two years Browning was afraid that the picture was deteriorating. "So it fares," he wrote to D. G. Rossetti, "with Page's pictures for the most part; they are like Flatman the Poet's famous 'Kings' in a great line he wrote—'Kings do not die—they only disappear' "¹⁷ The picture did, in fact, darken and is now reported to be completely ruined.¹⁸ But the *Self-Portrait* and the *Portrait of Mrs. Page*, which were blackened and cracked apparently beyond recovery, proved to have been covered with a layer of heavy varnish whose removal revealed the paint beneath still fresh and healthy; and some of the portraits in the possession of Mr. George Page, that have never been so varnished, are as fresh as any picture of their age.

What is Page's present position as a painter? On the basis of such of his work as I have been able to see, I believe he cannot be lumped together with Huntington and Henry Peters Grey, whom we customarily damn with faint praise by saying that they are "the best that their period produced." The decorative effect of Page's best work can be compared only with Whistler's best portraits, such as the *Rosa Corder* and the *Comte de Montesquiou-Fezensac*. But unlike Whistler, he was a true romantic, to whom the inner life was all important; and his work has the quality of deep and sustained sentiment

which represents the romantic age in its best and most permanent aspect. He is also typical of the romantic artist in the incompleteness of his achievement. We have only a fragment of his work, which was itself only a fragmentary expression of his gifts. Page is not alone in his generation in producing only a fragmentary expression of his powers; it is true of his contemporaries all over the western world. All who have studied the romantic movement, must have felt the mysterious contrast between the greatness of the men, as one comes to know them, and the littleness of their achievement. And this is the real problem which we must answer in trying to assay the personality of Page or of any other romantic artist. Why is he so incomplete?

Lowell, who dedicated his first volume of poems to Page, wrote an acute and prophetic letter to a mutual friend after his return from Italy in 1856. "About Page. He is grown older in face and hair (or want of it, rather), but is the same beautiful enthusiast. Just now it is Swedenborg whom he insists on decanting to you all the time. Naturally I wanted to see Page and not Swedenborg, so it was rather a bore, because I could not get *en rapport* with him. He has painted a *Venus* which all the galleries in Europe would contend for if it were by Titian—but why a *Venus*? It is his everlasting luck or destiny or whatever it may be—his want of *taste* I think we must call it. That seems to me his weak point . . . He is painting better than ever, but the artists say that he uses too much boiled oil, and that his pictures *must* grow black. Some I have already seen which had reached a mulatto stage and were on their way to perfect Uncle Toms, which, considering the prejudice of color, is a pity. He will prove to you that it can't be so, but his pictures never get so good a light as from the effulgence of his personal presence. However, I hope the *Venus* will stand, and if she does, his monument is built beyond all time and chance. If he only had more taste! It is enough for his friends that *he* is great." Lowell's complaint of taste is, as I interpret it, against his friend's discretion in painting a life size nude as a picture for the nineteenth century American collector. But as one looks today at the *Venus* or the *Moses on Mount Horeb*, one can see that their weakness was the weakness of romantic taste in general.

Romanticism coincided with, if it did not produce, the extinction

of the craft tradition of painting. A change in the mental climate of Europe that was discernible even in the later eighteenth century, transformed the European theory of the nature of the artist and the nature of his training for his work. Until the nineteenth century the art of painting had rested upon the firm basis of the craft of painting. The artist was trained by the master-and-apprentice system in a traditional craft knowledge, which had come down in unbroken line from the beginnings of European culture. This craft knowledge guided his development to the point at which his personal contribution could begin to flower. But romantic eclecticism concentrated the artist's attention upon the theory of inspiration while it cut him loose from his craft. He was to be a mystic, a seer, moved by the divine afflatus to see into the heart of things; but he was left to invent his technique for himself as best he could. The result was that an artist like Page had continually to struggle to find a method of expression, and, turning restlessly from one technical experiment to another, frittered away his powers in a lifetime of search for a way to be an artist. This was the *mal du siècle* which Browning felt in *Cleon*, the poem on the artist nature which he addressed to Page and based to some extent upon him—

We of these latter days, with greater mind
 Than our forerunners, since more composite,
 Look not so great, beside their simple way . . .

Browning had discerned the weakness of the eclectic artist when compared with "some whole man of the heroic age," although he could not see, as can we, the sudden universal check given to the artists' powers by the period of eclecticism. But even though we have today only fragments of Page's life work, what remains to us must, I believe, entitle him still to an important place in our history.

NOTES

¹ Isham, *American Painting*, 1905, page 559.

² Page is discussed in Henry T. Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists* (1867); H. W. French, *Artists of Connecticut* (1879); G. W. Sheldon, *American Painters* (1879); S. G. W. Benjamin, *Art in America* (1880); William Howe Downes, *Boston Painters and Paintings*, *Atlantic Monthly* (1888) Vol. 62, p. 384-5; and Isham, *op. cit.* (1905). James Jackson Jarves offers the only dissenting note in this chorus of praise in his article *Art in America*,

Its Condition and Prospects in the *Fine Arts Quarterly*, I (London, 1863) p. 393 ff.; but Page is the only figure painter whom Jarves thought worth a paragraph to himself. But of the many books published since the war, only LaFollette's *Art in America* (1929) and Mantle Fielding mention his name. There is a valuable biographical study by Scott H. Paradise in the *Phillips Bulletin*, Andover, October 1933, which is based, I believe, upon the tradition of the second Mrs. Page.

³ His works are in the collections of the City of New York, the New York Historical Society, the National Academy of Design; the storeroom of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; and the National Museum in Washington. None of these, with the exception of the *Portrait of Governor William L. Marcy* in the City Hall, New York, are works on which his contemporary fame rested.

⁴ Canvas, 59 x 36 inches. Exhibited in Page's Exhibition in the Studio Building, New York City, 1867; in his exhibit in the National Academy of Design at about the same time; Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893. Not shown since. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George S. Page of Pittsburgh, Mr. Blinn S. Page of Detroit, Mrs. Lesslie Stockton Howell, and Mr. Lowell Briggs Page.

⁵ Sophie Candace Stevens, Page's third wife. Canvas, 60¼ x 36¼ inches. Exhibited in the first two exhibitions above with the *Self-Portrait*. Reproduced by Isham and Benjamin. Page divorced his first wife, Lavinia Twibill, sister of the painter, c. 1843. He then married a celebrated beauty, Sara A. Dougherty, whom he divorced in Rome. His third wife was a pupil. The *Dictionary of American Biography* gives her name incorrectly. Gift of the same donors.

⁶ William Sartain, *Sartain's Magazine*, IV, January 1849. On Page as an engraver see also David McNeely Stauffer, *American Engravers upon Copper and Steel* (1907), 2 volumes.

⁷ Samuel Woodworth, *New York Mirror*, XIII (1835) page 15, and the reviews by the same of subsequent yearly exhibitions.

⁸ This picture and a *Venus and the Dolphin* were owned by the Boston Athenaeum until 1905. *The Holy Family* is now in the possession of Mrs. Henry D. Ashley of Kansas City.

⁹ See especially Charles Eliot Norton, *Letters of James Russell Lowell* (1894); and Frederic G. Kenyon, *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1897).

¹⁰ "Florentia," *Art Journal*, 1854, page 354.

¹¹ One cast is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, another is in the possession of Mr. George Page of Pittsburgh. See *Scribners*, May, 1876 (reprinted as a book by the Chiswick Press, London, 1876); *Art and Archaeology*, III, (June, 1916) page 311 ff.

¹² This is true of his portraits of Lowell, Browning, Charlotte Cushman, Farragut and Robert Gould Shaw, on which most of his contemporary fame rested.

¹³ His theory of color is found in a series of articles by him in *The Crayon*, I, (1844) pp. 55, 69 and 117.

¹⁴ Lowell, op. cit. says he used boiled oil, which of course darkens.

¹⁵ Op. cit. II, 148.

¹⁶ Op. cit. II, 170.

¹⁷ W. Hall Griffin, *The Life of Robert Browning*, 1910, page 192-3.

¹⁸ So reported by its present owner, Mr. Wilfred Meynell.

APPENDIX

THE extant works of William Page, so far as I have been able to locate them, are:
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts:

John Quincy Adams (Lent by the City of Boston)
W. L. Garrison
Harriet Hosmer
S. S. Littledale
Edna Littledale

Cambridge, Harvard University:

Thomas Wren Ward

Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, Mrs. L. B. Rantoul:

Maria White Lowell

Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts:

Self-Portrait (1860)

Portrait of Mrs. Page (c. 1860)

Mr. Blinn S. Page

Simon Stevens, brother-in-law of the third Mrs. Page.

Greatham, Sussex, Mr. Wilfred Meynell

Robert Browning (1854)

Kansas City, Mrs. Henry D. Ashley:

Holy Family (1837) formerly in the Boston Athenaeum

Head of a Child (crayon)

New York City:

City of New York:

Governor William L. Marcy (1839)

Governor Reuben E. Fenton (1870)

Miss Marian Holyoke:

Mrs. Edward Blake

Mr. James B. Lowell:

James Russell Lowell

Mrs. Frances Page McGill:

Colonel Robert Gould Shaw

Metropolitan Museum of Art:

Ideal head of Shakespeare (sculpture)

Head of a Child (2)

National Academy of Design:

Ferdinand T. L. Boyle

New York Historical Society:

Charles P. Daly (1848)

Mr. Livingston Rutherford:

John Rutherford

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Academy of the Fine Arts:

Mother and Child

Young Merchants



*Fig. 2. William Page: Portrait of Mrs. Page
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 3. William Page: The Young Merchants
Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts*

Pittsburgh, Mr. George S. Page:

Venus rising from the sea

Moses, Aaron, and Hur on Mount Horeb

Farragut in the rigging at Mobile Bay (a second version)

Ideal Head of Shakespeare (sculpture)

Madonna and Child

Flight into Egypt

Charles Briggs, editor of THE NATION

Charlotte P. Briggs, daughter of Charles Briggs

Charles Sumner (left unfinished at Page's death)

Self portrait (unfinished)

Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare House:

Ideal Head on Shakespeare (sculpture)

Washington, D. C., National Gallery:

General Winfield Scott

Folger Library

Shakespeare reading (1874)

'SAINT ANSANO' BY MEO DA SIENA

By W. R. VALENTINER

FROM Gentile da Fabriano to Raphael, Umbria, the land of Saint Francis of Assisi, has produced an art full of charm and sweet sentiment, and art congenial to its soft and ingratiating landscape. A less productive region, it started later in its artistic development than Tuscany with its long tradition and its many artists of constructive and dramatic power. The beginning of Umbrian art lies however in Tuscany. It was an offshoot, not of worldly Florence, but of Siena, the city of Saint Bernardino and Saint Catherine, who in spirit had so much in common with Saint Francis.

The first Sienese painter known to have emigrated from Siena to Umbria was Meo da Siena, possibly a pupil of Duccio and almost contemporary with him. He is mentioned as having settled in Perugia as early as 1319, when he acquired some property in the city. If he is identical with his namesake, the son of Guido da Siena (who painted in 1371 a Madonna for the city hall in Siena), our artist must have died before 1334. This identification is, however, not certain, as the name Meo (shortened from Bartolomeo) is a frequent one in Siena.

Artists who emigrate and settle for a lifetime in another country, less productive than their own, are in only exceptional instances leaders in their field. The great masters prefer to be in surroundings where they can measure themselves against others. Minor artists sometimes emigrate because they cannot compete with the best men in their own country, and they are appreciated—perhaps more than they deserve—in their adopted land where they meet with no competition. Meo da Siena belonged to this type. He cannot be compared with Duccio in importance, nor even with immediate followers of Duccio like Segna and Ugolino. He is not very subtle in design, and is somewhat provincial in expression. Yet like most painters of this period he has a fine sense of decorative pattern and delicate color combinations, with which he combines a pleasing sincerity and directness of senti-



Fig. 1. Meo da Siena: Polyptych. Perugia, Pinacoteca



Meo da Siena: Detail of Polyptych



*Fig. 2. Meo da Siena: St. Ansano
Detroit Institute of Arts*

ment. In the panel by him recently acquired by the Detroit museum (Fig. 2) the harmony of the soft blue costume and the dark cherry red mantle, of the white-black flag and the pale green palm leaf of martyrdom, is enchanting; and although the type of the young knight is somewhat peasantlike, his pious dignity and mild expression are delightful. We can well imagine that the soft charm of such a figure would appeal to the Umbrians, whose early artists were to a considerable extent inspired by the art of Meo. A wide-spread school developed around him in Perugia and its environs.

The few known works by him are in the museum of his adopted city, where is his only signed altarpiece (Fig. 1), and in the cathedral; while two dated predella panels (1333) are outside Italy in the museum in Frankfort. The present panel (Fig. 2) had no attribution attached to it when it was acquired, but it was not difficult to establish that it is the work of Meo da Siena by a comparison with his works in Perugia. The good-natured oval face of the Saint with its somewhat mechanical modelling from a dark outline toward the center, where we find the light concentrated upon the cheeks, the forehead, the nose and the chin; the heavy, oily silhouette of the figure; the decorative pattern on the dress and upon the golden background—all are characteristic of Meo, in whose altarpieces we can find for comparison numerous similarly composed half-length figures in the Duccio manner.

After the question of attribution was settled, it became apparent that the panel belonged originally to the above mentioned altarpiece by Meo in the museum of Perugia. One large and four small panels are missing from this altarpiece. Our Saint fits in position and size into the empty space to the left of the Madonna. The fact that the picture represents Saint Ansano proves the close connection of our artist with the Sienese school, for Saint Ansano was one of the patron saints of Siena.

One's first thought after such a discovery is a regret that blasphemous hands should have at some time robbed parts from a fine altarpiece and that these parts have left Italy forever. Unfortunately this is not an exceptional case. Among the innumerable paintings of the early Italian school in museums outside of Italy complete

altarpieces are of the greatest rarity. Nearly all these paintings are, as everyone knows, fragments belonging to altarpieces originally in Italian churches, of which other parts may be still in their original place or in Italian museums. Nothing would seem more sensible for civilized nations than to try to find a way to restore the separated parts to the original, from wherever they came. Yet such restitutions would mean almost a complete dissolution of the collections of early Italian paintings outside of Italy. One may question whether even if it were possible to please all parties in the event of such an exchange, mankind would benefit by it as much as it does now when the separated panels of Italian art all over the world help to create a wide interest in a great epoch of the past. These fragments probably give more pleasure, and certainly are of greater educational value in their present places, than if they were still in their original homes. Italy is so rich in art treasures that these dismembered paintings can hardly be missed in Italian collections, where the artists who created them are usually represented by a whole series of outstanding works. We can therefore feel glad that students and lovers of Italian art may now see an example of this artist in this country, where he is otherwise not represented.

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PORTRAITS BY FRANCESCO DA SANGALLO

By ULRICH MIDDELDORF

FRANCESCO DA SANGALLO (1494-1576) was perhaps the only Florentine sculptor of the sixteenth century who had a genuine interest in portraiture. Indeed, this art seems to have had such a fascination for him that it definitely influenced the character of his style, and was no doubt responsible for the strange course his development took. The example of Michelangelo, who did not carve a single portrait during his entire life, was probably responsible for the fact that his Florentine contemporaries and followers were so reluctant in this regard. It was not that they simply imitated this peculiarity of his. But Michelangelo's manner of thinking and working excluded such a trivial subject as portraiture may have appeared to him, and in adopting this manner his epigoni had also to adopt the limitations it implied. And those sculptors who were less or not at all under Michelangelo's influence were not well disposed toward portraiture for another reason: their classic tastes were not easily brought in accord with the realism it involved.

The *genius loci* at Florence was by no means adverse to portraiture. The preceding century had seen Florentine sculptors and painters leading in this field; and certainly now with the newly established ducal court there was a demand for portraits. And portraits were produced, but more frequently in painting than in marble and bronze. There is no significant parallel in Florentine sculpture of the period to Agnolo Bronzino and Francesco Salviati. In other centers of Italy the situation was different. The churches at Rome were full of monuments with portrait busts of the wealthy and the noble, of clergy and laity.¹ And Venice produced one of the great specialists in portrait sculpture of this period, Alessandro Vittoria, not to mention the fact that since Tullio Lombardi every great Venetian sculptor had been a good portraitist.

In Florence during the sixteenth century plastic portraits appear mostly as a kind of by-product, and they look as if their authors had

been forced into the task. The busts of the grand ducal family by Bandinelli² are eloquent examples of the unsatisfactory products with which the Florentine had then to content himself. Besides Francesco da Sangallo, only two other Florentine sculptors achieved any fame as portraitists. And even they would probably never have found this field if they had not been led to it by a special training: both were goldsmiths, and as such they had tried themselves with great success as medallists. Thus we have Cellini's bronze bust of Cosimo I in the Bargello and that of Bindo Altoviti in the Gardner Museum—portraits from Florence which compare favorably with those at Rome and at Venice. And we have Domenico Poggini as an equal to Bronzino, at least in the concept and style of his portraits, if not, unfortunately, in fertility.³ But Florence was no longer the leader, even in the art of the medal. The times of Niccolo Spinelli were past. It was, rather, in Northern Italy where such artists as Leone Leoni, Jacopo a Trezzo, Danese Cattaneo, Alessandro Vittoria and many others made the history of the later Renaissance medal. Pastorino can scarcely be counted among the Florentines in spite of his long stay in this town; his style was completely international.⁴

It is almost impossible to mention Francesco da Sangallo in the same breath with Cellini and Poggini. What was for them only a task occasionally fulfilled was for him the contents of his whole life. His sculptures were with a few exceptions all portraits, either independent busts and reliefs, or sepulchral figures. And when he turned towards medal work, like Poggini and Cellini, he shows at once the differences which separate him from his contemporaries. His medals have nothing of the decorative refinement cultivated by the goldsmith-medallists of the Cinquecento and willingly accepted by the great world. They betray a fanaticism in the pursuance of "truth" and character in portraiture, which is nowhere else to be found in this time; they reveal the hand of an almost ruthless sculptor to whom volume and plastic expression mean everything, grace and elegance nothing. Francesco da Sangallo's medals are almost like revenants from the Quattrocento in their strong simplicity and their emphasis on plain realistic portraiture. However, we shall see that especially in his youth Francesco da Sangallo could not entirely escape the tendencies of his period and



*Fig. 1. Francesco da Sangallo: Giovanni delle Bande Nere, Marble Bust
Florence, Museo Nazionale*



*Fig. 2. Francesco da Sangallo: Female Portrait, Marble Relief
Private Collection*



*Fig. 3. Francesco da Sangallo: Male Portrait, Marble Relief
Private Collection*

of his town, and that only slowly did he succeed in shaping his own individual style, which finally grew so independent that the artist seems to stand like a foreigner in his surroundings.⁵

One of the earliest known works of the master is a monumental, almost overpowering bust of Giovanni delle Bande Nere in the Bargello (Fig. 1). The sitter, of whom Francesco made a medal in 1525 and for whom probably later he designed an equestrian monument, belonged to a side line of the Medici family which after the extinction of the main line took over the Florentine government under Giovanni's son, Cosimo, the first grand duke. Giovanni was famous as a condottiere, hence his surname "delle Bande Nere" which refers to the troops he commanded. Apparently his life was that of a rough warrior lacking in the refinement which distinguished so many other members of his family. Among the *esprits* of his time he selected as his favorite Pietro Aretino, whose ways and vices, whose immense capacity of enjoying life and turning everything to his own advantage without many scruples or prejudices, must have appealed to the soldier's outlook on life. Giovanni's premature death in 1526 was a fitting end to his stormy career. He died in the arms of the Aretine from a wound which he had received near Mantua in an encounter with the troops of Georg von Frundsberg.

Francesco da Sangallo seems to have grasped the character of this man both in the bust and in the medal. The great bulk of the bust—Giovanni is shown almost down to the waist—symbolizes well his physical strength. There is little detail; the armor is rendered with a feeling for the great plastic contrasts. The movement—one arm is pushed forward and the head is turned slightly to the right—is abrupt and without pretense of Classical rhythm or *contraposto*. From other portraits of Giovanni we can judge that the head must have been a good likeness; they all show the short and neglected hair, the narrow eyes so close together, the bold nose and the tremendously strong jaw. The squint, which is easily recognizable in the bust since the pupils of the eyes are indicated, must have been characteristic of Giovanni; even his profile portrait in the Uffizi, which Aretino had asked Titian to paint from a death mask and a medal, shows it very pronouncedly.⁶

And yet, in spite of these features, this bust is scarcely what we

would call a very realistic portrait. The Quattrocento had greater success in carving a lifelike portrait so that it seems to speak. We need only to remember the bust of Giuliano dei Medici by Verrocchio formerly in the Dreyfus collection and now in the new National Gallery at Washington, or that of Pietro Mellini by Benedetto da Maiano in the Bargello. There is a strong restraint in Francesco da Sangallo's work which is new. A marble coldness for which the lack of detail and the peculiar roundness and smoothness of surface are responsible reminds us of Classic or Neo-Classic art. No attempt is made to characterize the different materials: the hardness of the metal in the armor, the softness of flesh, the fluffiness of the hair.

There is no doubt that it is the technical perfection, the simple and self-contained form of Classic marbles, which Francesco da Sangallo imitated here. He tried to give this coarse face something of the dignity of a hero from antiquity. It was the tendency of the time. Andrea Sansovino, the Florentine sculptor under whose protection Francesco probably grew up, and for whom we find him working later at Loreto,⁷ had modelled the Christian virtues of his sepulchral monuments in S. Maria del Popolo at Rome in completely Classic fashion. Many others had followed him, and why indeed should Francesco da Sangallo have been immune to this new tendency? It was really not so very new however. The Quattrocento had seen the beginning of it; now came the fulfillment. Whereas formerly a serious Classicism had been the ambition of only the more daring, it was now understood by even the slowest minds that modern art had to depend more or less on Classic art.

Francesco, besides being brought up by the greatest exponent of the new Classic style in sculpture, came from a home where this endeavor to understand and to imitate antiquity had always been greater than in any other contemporary artist's house. His father was Giuliano da Sangallo, the architect whose sketchbooks are perhaps the most complete documents for the study of Classic art in the Quattrocento, the architect who had pushed Florentine architecture forward to take the decisive step toward a new style which more nearly conformed to the Roman remains he had been studying than that of either Brunelleschi or Alberti. It seems that Francesco da Sangallo spent some years of

his childhood in Rome where his father had been called by Julius II. There he had, of course, every facility to study Classic sculpture; and we can be certain that his father, who had himself tried his hand occasionally at sculpture and who had been in this field one of the early convinced Classicists in Florence, led Francesco's studies in such a direction. It must have been the great event of these years of Francesco's life when the group of the Laocoon was found. Giuliano and Michelangelo, then one of Giuliano's proteges at Rome, were asked by the Pope to inspect the newly discovered Classic work. They took Francesco on this little expedition, and the deep impression this exciting adventure made on him is still to be read in a letter written by him many years later in his old age, where he describes the experience with a wealth of details as if it had only just happened.⁸

This letter shows that Francesco da Sangallo never forgot these impressions of his youth. We shall see that even in these, his earlier years, he was never as complete a Classicist as his father was, and the older he grew, the more he abandoned any such idea. But he made it a point to treasure the traditions of his family and everything connected with his great father and uncle Antonio, a tendency so remarkable in him that Vasari thought it worth mentioning. Francesco went on living in the house of the family in the Borgo Pinti, and there he preserved both Giuliano's sketchbook, which today is in the Vatican Library, and Antonio's sketchbook, which came from the library of Baron Geymuller to the Uffizi. These *compendia* of Classic architecture, and of the most Classic Renaissance architecture, seem to have been quite alive for him, at least we find sketches and inscriptions by his hand on many of their pages. Among the treasures of this house were the portrait of Giuliano and that of his grandfather, Francesco Giamberti, by Piero di Cosimo, two masterpieces of Italian painting today in the Mauritshuis in the Hague. A picture representing Cleopatra by Piero di Cosimo, who was apparently a friend of the family, may also have been old family property, since Vasari mentions it as belonging to Francesco. It probably is identical with the beautiful picture in the Musée Condé at Chantilly.

Francesco kept the best part of the family spirit alive. The universality of Giuliano lived on in him. As far as we know he did not paint

himself as his father had occasionally done, but he must have had a lively interest in painting. Besides the pictures by Piero di Cosimo already mentioned there was one by Sebastiano del Piombo in his house, which Vasari found worthy of his attention. In architecture, Francesco was really active, though today it is almost impossible to tell what his architecture looked like. His main work, the bell tower of S. Croce at Florence, was never carried further than the first story; and that has been torn down in the last century. An inadequate reproduction appearing on one of the artist's medals is the only record we have of it. Apparently he closely followed here the style of his relatives, especially that of his uncle Antonio, with whose towers of the church of S. Biagio in Montepulciano this tower of S. Croce would have probably had many resemblances. The drawings which might throw some light on his architectural activity have been only slightly studied, so it is difficult to trust other attributions of buildings to him which we may occasionally encounter.

How far Francesco da Sangallo in the beginning of his career deemed it wise to yield to the influence of the Classic tendencies of the early sixteenth century is best shown by two recently discovered works of his (Figs. 2 and 3). Their provenance is uncertain and they now make part of the collection of a well known painter. They are two portrait reliefs: that of a man with a strange head cover not unlike the cap which artists of the period used to wear, and that of a woman.⁹ Obviously they are companion pieces. They have a strange shape; the marble is cut into two ovals, which are almost filled by the two profile heads, leaving only a slight margin. There can be no doubt that it is their original shape, and that a carved wood or stucco frame was to give them a more solid and balanced appearance. They might have been designed to be inserted into a wall. Oval portrait reliefs, and even circular ones, had been almost unknown in Florence during the Quattrocento,¹⁰ but with the new century they became quite frequent. Apparently they were meant to be "all 'antica," having engraved gems from antiquity as their prototypes."

The Classic character of our two reliefs is apparent in the whole treatment of the heads, especially that of the woman with her Classic profile and simple arrangement of the hair in a few parallel tresses.



Fig. 4. Bandinelli: Self Portrait, Marble Relief
Florence, Opera del Duomo

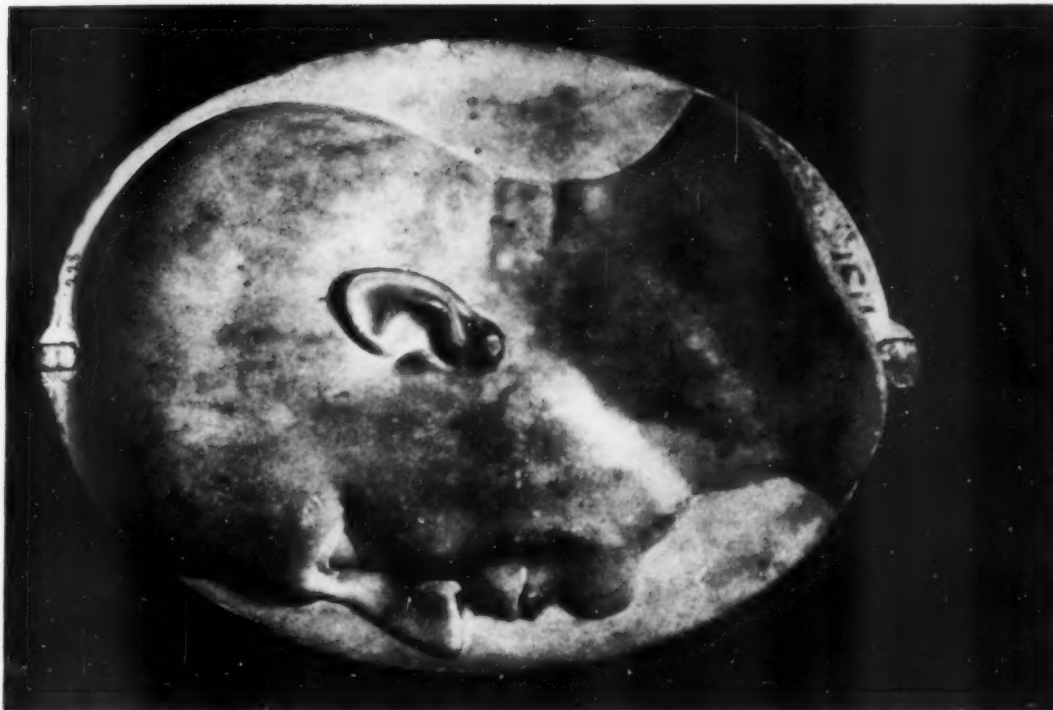


Fig. 6. Francesco da Sangallo (?): Portrait of an Unknown Man,
Marble Relief, Florence, Museo Nazionale



Fig. 5. Woodcut after a marble relief by Francesco da Sangallo:
Portrait of Piero di Cosimo (Lost)



Fig. 8. Francesco da Sangallo: Sketch for a medal in black crayon
Florence, Uffizi, Print Room

There are no longer the delicate little curls which Desiderio da Settignano liked so much and which characterized the softness of the hair so well, giving an impression of casualness. There is no indication of a dress or a drapery. Everything is avoided which might disturb the ideal atmosphere into which the personalities represented have been elevated.

The technique is not a little responsible for this impression of detachedness from everyday life. The principles which we observed in the bust of Giovanni delle Bande Nere have here been carried to perfection. The marble is beautifully smoothed, almost as if it were a precious stone. The design is simplified almost to abstraction, as one can see especially well in the stylization of the eyes, of the hair, and of the general outlines. If it were not for the artist's cap on the head of the man one might doubt that these reliefs are portraits; one might take them for representation of some pair of ideal classic figures or gods.¹²

However, we do not exhaust the description of these reliefs if we stop here. Despite their classic technique and stylization, they can no more be called pure classical works than the bust of Giovanni delle Bande Nere. Everything is stylized, it is true, but every form has kept a strong personal, individual character. The nose of the man, the peculiar folds of his neck, the eyes of both woman and man do not at all conform to classical standards. Their individual forms are not regularized by the stylization; on the contrary, their individuality is strongly emphasized. The woman's head is perhaps less marked in this regard than that of the man, because in general women's portraits show less character than men's portraits. The question is: at whose door have we to lay the responsibility for this departure from classical ideals? Perhaps to the marked features of the sitters? We must here be careful. It seems as if the artist, besides attempting to disguise his sitters as classic heroes, has also imposed upon their faces his own personal ideal of beauty, transforming them not a little according to his tastes. It would be a strange coincidence if both persons really had had the same shaped eyes, and it must make us suspicious to note the strong similarity in the noses and the eyes with those of Giovanni delle Bande Nere.

If we look over the series of the artist's medals, we see that he has given to all of his sitters these two strange traits: the strongly projecting, sharp nose, and the narrow eyes. All his heads have the same structural peculiarity; their profile flies back from a powerful chin, which seems exaggeratedly pushed forward through the straight edge of the nose into the receding line of the forehead. These are the distinctive marks which separate his work from that of any other medallist. It might seem gratuitous to ask for the why of this individual taste. It has often been said that an artist of strong personality is apt to instill something of his own physical individuality into his portraits. There have been many attempts to explain Rembrandt's portraits in this way, and certainly his innumerable self-portraits prove how very conscious he was of his own face; it would be no wonder if this self-consciousness influenced the way in which he looked at his sitters. The same may be claimed for Francesco da Sangallo. In his small *oeuvre* there are no less than six self-portraits if we count all the variations of the medal self-portrait. And they show us a type which is the quintessence of all his other portraits. The above described peculiarities are so strong here that we can understand his portraits as being the result of a struggle between the endeavor to do justice to the individuality of the sitter and an instinctive urge to transform it *ad imaginem suam*. That this urge constituted one of the fundamental problems of artistic creation had already then been clearly recognized by the wisest man of the age, Leonardo da Vinci, who speaks frequently in his treatises of the danger involved in giving way too much to this instinctive tendency.¹³

Such a general explanation, however, seems scarcely to be sufficient in the case of the two reliefs. One suspects that the struggle was not very hard; on the contrary one seems to discover that the artist is revelling in an abandonment to his subjective tendencies. And that a personal ideal (one might almost say prejudice) should assert itself to such an extent agrees with the tendency of the whole period. We notice a similar attitude in Bandinelli's portraits; and again in the unnaturally wide open round eyes Pontormo liked to give to his figures. The restraint which had characterized the older generation, that for which Leonardo had spoken when he uttered his warning, has been

given up. Every art has an individual flavour, and personal ideals help subconsciously to form every individual style. But now these subjective elements admittedly take the lead.

This subjectivism was of course possible only on the basis of a fully conquered control of the means to represent satisfactorily the things of the world. The Quattrocento had reached that aim, and now there begins a period of unrest and at times of a completely confused search for something new. There begins a rebellion against the conventions elaborated by the preceding generations. Michelangelo concentrates on the human figure, trying to penetrate more profoundly into the secrets of the body, its functions and its possibilities of expression, and abandoning everything else for the sake of this single ideal. Others saw new ways in a more restrained style involving a greater severity of form, which many of them found in an even closer emulation of antiquity than that which the generation of Sansovino had seen. In them the spirit of a true Neo-Classicism was born. Still others followed more personal impulses or predilections for special forms, proportions, or ornamental patterns. They comprise a highly subjective group. Seldom, however, are these tendencies embodied isolated and pure in any one artist. Generally they are blended with each other as classicism and subjective mannerism were blended in Francesco da Sangallo.

One element, though, is common to all artists of this time: the emphasis on a strong individualism. It is not only that they seek distinction in their daily lives by adorning themselves with titles like that of "Cavaliere," and by living like princes, forgetting the humble, artisan-like position which their fathers, and even the greatest among them like Donatello and Verrocchio, had occupied. But they begin to assert their personalities and their special blends of artistic tendencies with quite a new self-assurance. Compared with the loudness with which a Bandinelli and a Sangallo preached their artistic creeds, even the art of Donatello, which certainly was not restrained, seems subdued and modest, like a contribution to a greater, common task. The virtuoso, with his will to achieve perfection in his field despite the danger of isolating himself, with his preoccupation with the *how* of expression rather than the *what*, was born at this time.

The mannerism in the conception of the human face is one of Francesco's concessions to the spirit of his age. And paradoxically we may say that his further development towards a strange realism which led him more and more into a self-chosen, complete isolation is another and perhaps his greatest concession to this spirit of his time. How strongly his portraits differ even from those of a comparatively related colleague of his may be seen best in a comparison of the two new reliefs with a similar portrait of Baccio Bandinelli (Fig. 4), which is either a self-portrait or the work of his young son Clemente.¹⁴ At first sight the works of both artists may look rather similar. And certainly they share a certain brutality of expression. Yet in Bandinelli there is much less emphasis on the abstract, decorative quality of the surface, and no subjective distortion of the profile. If anything, he has tried to embellish his features according to the canon of classic beauty and dignity. He is fundamentally much more classically minded than Francesco da Sangallo, even if he understood much less about classic marble technique.

It is possible to date these two new portrait reliefs rather precisely. Piero di Cosimo, as we saw, seems to have been a close friend of the Sangallo family. And Vasari reports in the life of that painter that Francesco da Sangallo made a portrait of him when Piero was very old, at any rate before his death in 1521. This portrait is now lost, but Vasari has apparently preserved a copy of it in the woodcuts, which illustrate the second edition of his "Vite" (Fig. 5). It is not unusual for him to reproduce among his illustrations the portraits about which he writes. Francesco's portrait of Piero di Cosimo must have been extremely similar to the two new reliefs. Of course it is difficult to judge such a paraphrase of a sculpture, which is a graphic reproduction from the Cinquecento, but we can discover some familiar traits in the woodcut: the severe profile with a straight and bulky nose, and the artist's cap underneath the large hat, similar to that of his male portrait. And the hat seems to show some of the smoothness of the polished marble even in the reproduction. The dress Piero wears in the woodcut is obviously an addition by the draughtsman; many of the portraits in Vasari's book have been completed in this way. We may imagine Francesco da Sangallo's original to have been as devoid of such

trivial detail as the new marble reliefs. Perhaps we are not too far wrong if we assign the portraits of the unknown couple to about the same period as that of Piero di Cosimo, to the years around or shortly before 1520. Thus they would be, together with the medal of 1522 of Lorenzo, the Duke of Urbino, the earliest preserved work of the young artist.

The Bargello in Florence owns a similar profile portrait in marble which deserves a mention in this connection (Fig. 6). It represents an old bald-headed man, and because of its sharp physiognomic character it has been occasionally loosely associated with Leonardo da Vinci or Giovan Francesco Rustici.¹⁵ Technically it corresponds completely to these early portraits by Francesco da Sangallo, but the forms are not quite outspoken enough to ascribe it to him with full assurance. It may very well be still an earlier work of his, from a period of his career which is unknown to us and in which his personality was less developed than later. If this is true the profile would be an invaluable document for the artist's early interest in peculiar human features, an interest so much responsible for his later style.

There is little hope of identifying the couple represented in the two new oval reliefs unless some fortunate chance comes to our help. For a moment I had thought a drawing in the Victoria and Albert Museum,¹⁶ might give us a clue. It is the portrait of Benedetto Varchi (1503-1565), as the contemporary inscription tells us, a Florentine *bel esprit* of the period with whom we know Francesco was in friendly relations. There is a certain resemblance to the male profile relief, but considering the confusion between the individual characters and mannerisms of the sitter and artist, which we discovered in the portraits of the pair, one must be careful in attempting to identify the two persons represented. Moreover, can one see in the man with the artist's cap the writer, historian, and humanist—Varchi? There seems to be also a discrepancy in date. When Francesco da Sangallo carved the marble reliefs towards 1520, Varchi was only about eighteen years old; the person of the relief is, however, scarcely less than thirty years old.

In 1542, more than twenty years after this early group of portraits, Francesco da Sangallo carved a self-portrait in marble (Fig. 7), which

he gave as a kind of *ex voto* to the little church of S. Maria Primerana in Fiesole and which is the prototype of all his numerous medals with his self-portrait. This work shows some significant changes in style. Most of the classic masquerading is discarded, and a stronger realism dominates. The artist certainly has not flattered himself. On the contrary, as we should expect from the introduction of his own physical characteristics into the faces of his sitters, he seems to have been extremely proud of his sharp nose, his piercing eyes, the almost satyr-like outlines of his forehead and of his eyebrows, and he follows them with an intensity which carries him slightly beyond the probable. The eyes are really looking now; they are no longer veiled as were the eyes of the classic statues, which came out of the ground minus the originally painted indications of the pupils which once made them so alive. The beard is rendered with a feeling for the texture, and so is the cap and the little of the dress that shows.

The change is especially remarkable if we compare the portrait of Francesco's wife, Elena Marzupini, which is often to be found on the back of his self-portrait medals, with the portrait of the unknown woman. A rendering of her real clothes, her real hairdress, and her quite unconventional features makes her appear like a real individual; the idealization of the earlier female portrait is entirely gone; a Florentine woman, who certainly was no beauty, is almost too brutally introduced to us in all her homeliness. How far we can trust this portrait as to likeness is, however, another question. Her face more nearly resembles that of her husband than we are willing to believe it really did. So this obsession of the artist remains.

And there remains another important principle: all these detail forms, all these attempts to reach a more subtle characterization are subordinated to the old feeling for a decorative unity. The exaggeration of his individual features leads the artist to an emphasis of the ornamental qualities of lines, of the whole modelling. The old feeling for the beautiful surface, the perfect workmanship with which the quality of the marble is made to speak are still there, only much refined in comparison to the almost primitive or archaic simplicity of the earlier reliefs. There is severe stylization; only it is now entirely abstracted from nature, not at all any longer imposed from an extra-



*Fig. 9. Francesco da Sangallo: Bishop Leonardo Bonafede, Tomb Figure
Florence, Certosa di Galazzo*



*Fig. 10. Francesco da Sangallo: The Abbess Colomba Ghezzi, Tomb Figure
Florence, Museo Bardini*



*Fig. 11. Francesco da Sangallo: Bishop Angelo Marzi-Medici, Marble Monument
Florence, SS. Annuncziata*

neous classic ideal. All of Francesco da Sangallo's medals from this period show the same new style. And the medals, by the absolute contrast in which they stand to the works of the other medallists of the period, prove perhaps best how unique at this time was this conception of the portrait, i. e., this idea of style, based so utterly on observation of individual features.

From about the same years must date a drawing by the artist in the Uffizi (Fig. 8), which never has been noticed.¹⁷ Francesco da Sangallo covered the back of a letter directed to him by the bishop, Paolo Giovio, another scholarly friend of his whose poignant ugliness he preserved for posterity in a medal and a life-size statue on his tomb in S. Lorenzo at Florence—Francesco covered the back of the letter with sketches for a roof construction and with two studies for a medal of an unknown man. The first of the latter is the profile put against a dark background, and the second one is an attempt to judge the effect of the whole medal, even with its lettering. Both sketches, which are about of the size intended for the medal, are carefully executed in black chalk with a *sfumato*, which can also be noticed in other drawings by Francesco da Sangallo. The attribution of the sheet is beyond doubt. The address, *a.m. Francesco Sangallo*, is still to be read on the outside of the note, and the stylization of the face is too outspoken to be not immediately recognized.

Though Paolo Giovio forgot to date his letter, we may draw a few conclusions from the fact that Sangallo used it as drawing paper. That happened probably immediately or shortly after the letter had arrived, before it had any chance of being thrown away or used up in some other manner. Since Giovio died in 1552, it must have been before that year. The closest parallels among the executed medals are those of Niccolo Martelli of 1544 and perhaps that of Lelio Torelli of 1551. This drawing, insignificant as it may look, has some importance beyond the fact that it is a welcome addition to Francesco da Sangallo's *oeuvre*. It is one of a very few *sui generis*. Pisanello left a number of drawings for medals, but we are less fortunate in regard to the medallists of the following generation. Other than this drawing by Francesco da Sangallo, a few sketches by Sperandio¹⁸ are almost all I can remember.¹⁹ Francesco's drawing, showing as it does the two different

stages of completion, gives us a better insight than most drawings into the working of the mind of one of the famous medallists of the Renaissance.

After the moderate, stylized realism of his self-portrait and the related works, Francesco da Sangallo's style changed rapidly into something which stands without any parallel in its time, but which is the logical continuation of his previous development. In 1550 he signed the sepulchral statue of the pious and generally venerated bishop of Cortona, Leonardo Bonafede, in the Certosa near Florence, which indicates the culmination point of his career (Fig. 9). Sangallo had a whole chapel at his disposition for this monument, and it is most surprising to see how he availed himself of such an opportunity.

The figure of the dead man has no special architectural frame, only that of the colorful and yet severe composition of the inlaid marble floor. The effect of this figure, resting directly on the floor in the center of the chapel, without a bier or other support, is startling. And it is that much more so as the figure of the dead is something completely unexpected, and something without any parallel in Italian art. At first sight it may even look repulsive in its realism, but soon the eye is completely fascinated by the white, polished beauty of the material, a perfect piece of marble treated in the most precious way. And one admires the taste with which the surrounding colored marbles are graded to give the most effective foil to this beautiful central piece. The feeling for *decorum* expresses itself in the last detail of this work. If we notice a tendency either toward bareness or overrichness in many of Sangallo's other works we find that in this figure he applied ornament in the wisest measure. The jewelled mitre and the rich brocaded cushions serving as a headrest are a beautiful accent, which instead of being distracting as is so often the case, concentrate the attention on the main point of interest: the beautiful head and the hands. And one can easily understand how the *outré* realism neither in the face nor in the hands goes so far as to destroy the dignity of the figure. On the contrary, this face with its hundreds of little wrinkles, its sharp furrows around the mouth, its tired skin and flesh, has a distinction and monumentality which is second only to that which the Pollaiuoli succeeded in giving, in a very similar work, to the head of Innocent VIII

in his monument in St. Peter's. And here, as there, this effect is rendered in the sincerest way without any falsehood, only by an understanding study of nature, by an unexcelled mastery of technique, and by a very fine feeling for the decorative value of the material.

If we spoke of the stylization of the self-portrait as something which struck our eye as still somewhat *recherché*, here, we realize, stylization serves as only one means of expression among others. We can best appreciate the complete lack of pretension if we think how any other sculptor of the period, how even Francesco da Sangallo a few years earlier would have treated the bishop's garments. A good comparison from Sangallo's earlier *oeuvre* is the monument for a nun²⁰ carved in 1540 now in the Museo Bardini at Florence (Fig. 10). It is a beautiful work, but how shallow it is in conception compared with the Bonafede monument! One need only compare a detail such as the sleeves. In the earlier work they are pompous and artificially arranged; those of the Bishop Bonafede fall softly, naturally, reminding us of the best Quattrocento tradition.

However, this was a height to be reached but once in a lifetime, and works done shortly before, such as the monument of the Bishop Angelo Marzi-Medici (1546) in the SS. Annunziata at Florence (Fig. 11), or later, for example the statue of Paolo Giovio (1560) in the cloister of S. Lorenzo, appear either immature or show a sad decline. Francesco da Sangallo only once reached the perfect identity of portrait realism with an outspoken personal style, which is perhaps the ideal of every portraitist, and which occurred so frequently in the Quattrocento. His whole development tended in this direction; works of his such as the self-portrait predicted such a fulfillment. It is a pity that it materialized only once. But even so, Francesco da Sangallo has some claim to immortality. The statue of Leonardo Bonafede belongs among the really great portraits of all ages, and it is understandable that it is one of the very few works of this period which have gained wide-spread popularity.

The monument of Bishop Marzi-Medici is marred by too much display of virtuosity in the handling of the marble. Ammanati, in his monument in S. Pietro in Montorio,²¹ succeeded much better in rendering the brilliancy and the crispness of such garments. It was a task

which sculpture was not capable of really solving before Bernini's time. And Sangallo's Quattrocento-like conscientiousness in detail was certainly least adapted to bring fluency into this overrichness. For the same reason his superabundance of ornament is frequently annoying. The early group of St. Anne with the Virgin and Christ (Fig. 14) in Or San Michele already shows signs in this direction. How noble in comparison is the ornament of the mitre of Leonardo Bonafede! The head of Angelo Marzi-Medici carries to a greater intensity the principles which we observed in the self-portrait. But they have remained artistic principles; they lack humanity, and so the face, though it certainly is a good likeness, remains a mask, and the expression a grimace. The same is true of the face of the statue of Paolo Giovio. Nothing can show the profound qualities of the head of Leonardo Bonafede better than such comparisons. The pose of the bishop in the Annunziata, which has a certain grandezza is a conventional Roman motive.²² It was perhaps Sangallo's undoing that he began to look out again for convenient formulas, as those which helped him in his youth. The statue of Paolo Giovio is strongly Michelangelesque in its pose, and the drapery is schematic in the sense that Jacopo Sansovino's draperies are schematic when he remains the victim of occasional fits of a sterile Classicism.²³ Sangallo had knowledge of this style probably through Bartolomeo Ammanni, who in his younger years had produced a dry Tuscan version of it.²⁴

The end of Francesco da Sangallo's career is marked by a medal of 1570 and another *ex voto* in S. Maria Primerana in Fiesole (Fig. 12), that of Francesco del Fede, of 1575. Little is left of the old spirit. The faithfulness to nature is still there, unaltered since the days of the Bonafede monument; but the personal quality of this style is broken as if Sangallo had become an old man.²⁵ There is still the forceful outline of the profile, but the strong unity of his older works is completely gone, so that the relief of Francesco del Fede is almost no different from any other realistic portrait of any time. This is greatly due to a dissolution of the once wonderful technique, to the indiscriminate use of drill holes and a lack in balance caused by an attempt to render still more naturalistically the different quality of hair, beard, and skin. The medal shows the same decline.



Fig. 12. Francesco da Sangallo: Portrait of Francesco del Fede,
Marble Relief. Fiesole, S. Maria Primetrana



Fig. 7. Francesco da Sangallo: Self Portrait, Marble Relief
Fiesole, S. Maria Primetrana

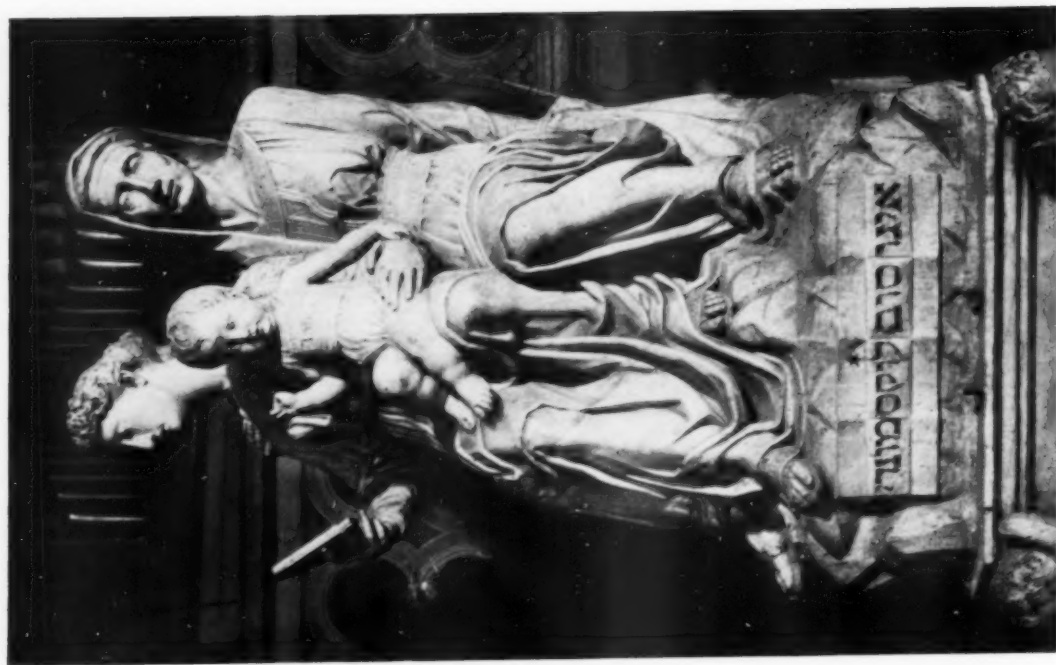


Fig. 14. Francesco da Sangallo: S. Anne, The Virgin and
The Child, Marble Group
Florence, Or San Michele



Fig. 13. Francesco da Sangallo: St. John The Baptist,
Bronze Statuette
New York, Frick Collection

It has been customary to treat the medallist, Francesco de Sangallo, as a belated Quattrocentist. Also in our characterization of the sculptor Francesco da Sangallo the comparison with the Quattrocento is continually forced upon us in spite of all his concessions to the spirit of his own age. Indeed the main problem of his artistic personality is to find out *how* he could develop into such an anachronism. We have said before that it was quite characteristic of the spirit of the time. Others went other ways not less strange than his but *why* Francesco went in this particular direction will probably always defy our curiosity. We are scarcely ever allowed to disentangle one of these irrational puzzles which are the foundations of individuality. It is, however, possible to explain what help he had in his strange course, since obviously Quattrocento sculpture has directly inspired him.

An interest in the art of the preceding century is not rare in the sixteenth century. After all, this was the age of the beginning of historic self-contemplation, the age of Vasari. Among the artists, Bandinelli is well known to have harbored a strong liking for Donatello, the sculptor who since his life-time had been regarded as the main exponent of his own age.²⁶ What use did a man like Bandinelli make of this looking back to the ancient glories of his town? His statues of Giovanni delle Bande Nere and of Duke Alessandro in the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence²⁷ perhaps best answer this question. Especially in the latter he does not make it a secret that he was strongly impressed by the powerful and yet elastic pose of Donatello's St. George, and he tries to reproduce it in a modern paraphrase. It does not concern us here that he was not particularly successful in this attempt and still less so in the other statue. It was the expressive motive in Donatello which he deemed worthy of his attention. And wherever else we see Bandinelli borrow from Donatello we find him taking such motives as the figures of the crying woman in Donatello's Deposition reliefs.²⁸

Francesco da Sangallo had been attracted by Donatello's motives in his younger years too, but he did not confine himself to such a superficial appreciation of Donatello's art. He tried to penetrate more deeply into it. So we see him almost aping Donatello in a bronze stat-

uette of the baptizing St. John Prato, of which there is a splendid replica in the Frick Collection in New York. (Fig. 13) And only this peculiar "empathy" into the style of the older master is an excuse for the confusion, which existed for many generations in regard to a marble statue of St. John by him in the Bargello.²⁹ It is found reproduced everywhere as an undoubted work by Donatello, and only quite recently has been restored to its real author.³⁰ Now that we know its real date, we cannot fail to acknowledge the presence of a strong influence of Michelangelo in it.

This ability of blending the most heterogeneous elements into a perfect unity, which in this case misled the critics completely in regard to date and attribution, is to be found also in the main work of Francesco's youth, the group of S. Anne (Fig. 14) in Or San Michele at Florence (1522-1526). Leonardo da Vinci's famous composition was not without influence on it;³¹ Andrea Sansovino was another godfather to it. In the heavy and stiff embroidery of the garments Byzantine fashion seems to have come into life again. Sangallo may have admired the rich effect of such decoration in the monuments by the Cosmati at Rome, though he may have noticed that Donatello was occasionally fond of this kind of heavy ornament, as in the Judith, probably also under the influence of Roman works. The head of the Virgin is a piece of purest Classicism, and not unlike the female relief portrait. But what determines the character of the group more than all these separate elements is the truly Quattrocentesque tendency to find a strong, expressive form for every detail. And the conscientiousness which seizes on the remotest little break in a piece of drapery or the smallest anatomical detail in order to make the most of it is no less Quattrocentesque.

So it happens that the drapery of the Virgin and St. Anne finds an almost literal correspondence in Donatello's Annunciation in S. Croce,³² that the Child looks like one of Antonio Rossellino's creatures, and that the head of St. Anne has the greatest similarity with the portrait heads in the sepulchral monuments of Desiderio, Michelozzo, and Bernardo Rossellino. This is no casual borrowing of motives, but the result of Francesco da Sangallo's thorough study of the style and character of Quattrocento sculpture. There are still

other examples such as the heads of the Apostles on his tomb for Piero di Medici in Monte Cassino (circa 1547) which could almost pass for works from the school of Isaia da Pisa or Paolo Romano. The base of the monument in the SS. Annunziata at Florence is designed with a quite out-of-date archaic flatness. It is over-ornate as Donatello's later decoration pieces were. And we must remember in this connection again Francesco da Sangallo's completely un-Cinquecentesque liking for rich ornamentation in general. So nothing is more natural than to assume that the Quattrocentesque character of our group of portraits is not due to chance but to conscious study of the sort wholly compatible with the self-assured character of Francesco da Sangallo. Pure chance seems to have played less part in his whole art than with most artists. The consistency of his *oeuvre* and the logic of his stylistic development, no matter if it lead him completely away from the sacred traditions of his family does not suggest a casual approach. On the contrary, his tenacity is perhaps the main force in Francesco's personality, and it is one of his best contributions to the picturesque ensemble which these individualists of the sixteenth century were forming.

We must be satisfied with these few glimpses into this interesting mind. There exists no line by Francesco da Sangallo of autobiographical value—be it of the conscious or of the unconscious kind—which might lead us deeper into the secrets of his inner life. But we must be careful not to generalize our observations on the art of a master. Who could discover in the pious paintings of Perugino an indication of his avariciousness and of his apostasy? Who could expect the suave Empoli to have been a glutton who occasionally painted a still life of eatables in order to be able to eat all the good things after he had painted them. In Pocetti, the painter of elegant decoration, who would have recognized the associate of drunkards and other reprobates, whom fate, even in his death, led once more into the tavern which had been the home of his lifetime?³³ There are many other instances which warn us in a similar way not to attempt the impossible in breaking through the limitations of our knowledge. On the other hand, they do console us with the thought that it does not always pay to pry into the private life and character of an artist.

And perhaps we may be glad that time has spared us the disappointment of a Francesco da Sangallo *en pantoufles*.

NOTES

¹ Cf. the recent book by August Grisebach, *Römische Porträtbüsten der Gegenreformation*, (Römische Forschungen der Bibliotheca Hertziana, Band XIII), Leipzig, 1936.

² Venturi, *Storia Dell'Arte Italiana*, X, pt. II (1936), figs. 174, 175, 180, 193, 194, 195, 197.

³ *Burlington Magazine*, LIII (1928), p. 9 ff., Grisebach, l. c., pp. 16, 74 ff.

⁴ George Habich, *Die Medaillen der Italienischen Renaissance*, Stuttgart und Berlin, 1922, p. 124, states very convincingly that Pastorino can hardly be described as a parallel to Bronzino, as has been done occasionally.

⁵ For Sangallo's life and *oeuvre* and for bibliographical indications see my article in *Thieme-Becker, Künstler-Lexikon*, XXIX (1935), p. 404 ff., and Venturi l. c. X, pt. I (1935), p. 243 ff.

⁶ For the questions of the portraits of Giovanni delle Bande Nere cf. Bottari-Ticozzi, *Raccolta di lettere*, I (1822), p. 67; G. Gaye, *Carteggio*, II (1840), pp. 311, 332, 351, III (1840), p. 473; A. Heiss, *Les Medailleurs de la Renaissance*, (Paris, 1881-1892), VIII, Pls. 20, 21; G. Gronau, *Rivista d'Arte* (1905), p. 135 ff.; C. Buttin, *Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, LXVII (1925), I, p. 1 ff.; E. Janni, *Emporium*, LXIV (1926) p. 207 ff.

⁷ About 1533, cf. G. Haydn Huntley, *Andrea Sansovino*, (Cambridge, 1935) p. 75 ff.

⁸ This letter dates from 1567 and is printed in Carlo Fea, *Miscellanea filologica critica e antiquaria*, (Rome, 1790) p. 329, and in Grimm, *Das Leben Michelangelos*, 5th ed., (Berlin, 1879), 556 ff.

⁹ The size of each relief is 36 x 27 cm.

¹⁰ One of the rare exceptions is the relief of a girl in the Castello Sforzesco at Milan. It occurs in another version in different, more normal shape in London. The latter seems to be really a Quattrocento work; the piece at Milan is extremely beautiful in workmanship, but very puzzling as to its date. Could it be, as apparently F. Schottmüller thought, and as Clarence Kennedy frequently suggested to me, a replica dating from the sixteenth century? E. MacLagan and M. H. Longhurst, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, (London, 1932) p. 43, no. 923-1900; F. Schottmüller, *Die Italienischen und Spanischen Bildwerke der Renaissance und des Barock*, (Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum, 1933) p. 46, no. M. 114; S. Vigezzi, *La Scultura in Milano*, (Milano, 1934) p. 143 ff., no. 439.

For the use of portrait medallions in Florentine tombs of the Quattrocento see my review of Dr. Grisebach's above quoted book in one of the forthcoming issues of *The Art Bulletin*.
¹¹ Cf. Furtwängler, *Die Antiken Gemmen*, (Berlin—Leipzig, 1900), I, Pl. XXXI, nos. 29, 39.

¹² I remember a pair of similar reliefs in the Museo Civico at Spoleto, which confronts us with the same problem; the woman strongly resembles that of our portraits, but has, however, a cap similar to that of the man. The male portrait in Spoleto, if found alone, might almost be taken for a Zeus. I cannot imagine in what way these reliefs are related to ours, and I fail to remember their style.

¹³ Leonardo writes in his treatise on painting: "Il pittore pinga se stesso"; and: "... perchè n' ho conosciuti alcuni, che in tutte le sue figure pare haver si ritratto al naturale, et in quelle si vede li atti e li modi del loro fattore ..." and: "... si che ricordati intendere i manchamenti che sono nella tua persona, e da quelli ti guarda nelle figure che da te si com-

pongeno." Leonardo da Vinci, *Das Buch der Malerei*, ed. Heinrich Ludwig, *Quellenschriften zur Kunstgeschichte*, vol. XV. (Vienna, 1882) P. 158 segg. One can find there still other similar quotations f. i. p. 221 and 305.

¹⁴ For the different replicas of Bandinelli's portrait relief cf. F. Schottmüller, *op. cit.*, p. 165, no. 23. We may attribute to Bandinelli also some of the profile portraits of Cosimo I in the Bargello. Cf. Venturi, l. c. X. pt. II, p. 212.

¹⁵ Malaguzzi-Valeri, *Leonardo da Vinci e la Scultura*, Bologna, s. a., fig. 4, where it is confronted with a drawing by Leonardo, which shows a closely related type.

¹⁶ No. 154, South Kensington Museum, *Dyce Collection, A Catalogue of the Paintings, Miniatures, Drawings, etc.*, (London, 1874), p. 27, no. 157; E. Steinmann, *Michelangelo im Spiegel seiner Zeit*, (1930) Pl. XIV. The drawing may be made after a medal by Domenico Poggini, which is reproduced also in Venturi, l. c. X. pt. II, fig. 248.

¹⁷ Uffizi 1670 Arch. The sketches for the medal are in black crayon. The photograph I owe to the ever ready helpfulness of Mrs. Hilde Degenhart-Bauer.

¹⁸ Hill, *Burlington Magazine*, XVI (1909), p. 24 ff., *Catalogue of the Oppenheimer Sale*, Christie's July 10-14, 1936, no. 179. Another drawing attributed to Sperandio, I do not know how correctly, has been published in *Connoisseur*, (October, 1918), p. 64.

¹⁹ I cannot accept the famous drawing in Venice representing Maximilian I and Bianca Maria Sforza as a medallist's drawing. It is colored and looks like the work of a miniaturist, perhaps of one of the Predis. That would not exclude the fact that the drawing, of a copy after it, perhaps a miniature, may have served as model for G. M. Cavalli's medal. The most recent items of the long bibliography are: Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals*, (1930), I, p. 61; Suida, *Leonardo und sein Kreis*, (1929), p. 173, fig. 172, ascribes it to Predis.

²⁰ It is the monument of the Abbess Colomba Ghezzi, and was formerly in S. Maria della Scala at Florence.

²¹ These monuments were made between 1550 and 1555. Cf. Friedrich Kriegbaum, *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, III, p. 92 ff.; Venturi, l. c. X pt. II figs. 313-14.

²² The similarity between Francesco da Sangallo's monument and those by Ammanati in the pose of the lying figures can be explained by a common Roman prototype. Francesco was in Rome at various times between 1540 and 1546, where he had a chance to get acquainted with the newest ideas.

²³ F. i. in his relief in the Santo at Padua; Venturi, l. c. X pt. II figs. 519-20.

²⁴ Venturi, *op. cit.* X. pt. II, figs. 306-308, fig. 513.

²⁵ There are in fact voices of this time which speak about him as such, especially a letter by Vincenzo Borghini of 1565, Bottari-Ticozzi, *op. cit.* I, p. 197.

²⁶ *Burlington Magazine*, LVII (1930), p. 66. In another place I shall come back to this question, especially in connection with the drawings of Bandinelli and his school. Cf. *Print Collections on Italy*, XXIV, 1937, pt. 290.

²⁷ Venturi, *op. cit.*, X, pt. II (1936) figs. 194, 195.

²⁸ Cf. the interesting article by F. Antal, *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, I, (1937), p. 70 ff.

²⁹ P. Schubring, *Donatello, Klassiker der Kunst*, XI, (1907), p. 37.

³⁰ By Dr. H. Kauffmann, cf. his *Donatello*, (Berlin, 1935) p. 211.

³¹ Cf. Heydenreich, *Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, X (1933), p. 216, fig. 13.

³² It is, however, significant that it should be this most classic of all Donatello's works, which compares best with the Cinquecento work.

³³ See the accounts Vasari and Baldinucci give of the habits of these artists which belong to the masterpieces of the bizarre genre in Italian literature.

APPENDIX

A Chronological Catalogue of the Medals by Francesco da Sangallo

BECAUSE the lists of Francesco da Sangallo's medals in the standard handbooks like Armand are outdated, it seems advisable to give at least a summary new list. For the exact description see the following books:

- Armand, *Les Médailleurs Italiens*, Paris, I (1883), p. 156 ff., III (1887) p. 62.
 Heiss, *Les Médailleurs de la Renaissance*, Paris, 1890, v. VIII, p. 91 ff., Pls. 14-16.
 Bode, *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, XV (1904) p. 41.
 L. Forrer, *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, V, (London, 1912) p. 324 ff.
 G. Habich, *Die Medallisten der Italian Renaissance*, 1922, p. 75, Pl. LVI.

I owe thanks to Sir George Hill for his kindness in letting me compare my list with his notes, and for drawing my attention to the rare version of the self-portrait No. 4. I have not given descriptions of the pieces as they can be found easily in the books quoted.

1. Lorenzo dei Medici, Duca d'Urbino (1519), c. 1515-1520: Armand, I pp. 158-9, III, p. 62; Heiss, VIII, p. 96, Pl. XV, 5; Forrer, p. 329.
2. Giovanni dei Medici, delle Bande Nere, (Dated 1522): Armand, I, p. 157, 2; Heiss, VIII, p. 92, Pl. XVI; Habich, Pl. LVI, 4.
3. Niccolò Martelli—(Signed and dated) 1544: Venturi, *Le Gallerie Italiane*, IV, (1899), p. 8; Venturi, *Storia dell'Arte Italiana*, X, pt. I (1935), fig. 197.
4. Self-Portrait—Reverse, Allegorical Subject, Inscription: *Tra sterpi insidi e strati fame et morte*. (Dated 1550): *Num. Chron.* (1889), p. 375, no. 3.
5. Self-Portrait—Reverse, Mythological Subject, Inscription: *Dunabo* (dated 1550): Armand, I, p. 158, 5; Heiss, VIII, p. 93 i, Pl. XV, 2.
6. Self-Portrait—Reverse, Campanile of S. Croce (dated 1550): Armand, I, p. 158, 8; Heiss, VIII, p. 94, 4.
7. Lelio Torelli (dated 1551): Hill, *Burlington Magazine*, XX (1911-12), p. 207, Pl. II, 6.
8. Self-Portrait—Reverse, Campanile of S. Croce (dated 1551): Armand, I, pp. 158, 6; Heiss, VIII, p. 94, 2; Habich, Pl. LVI, I; Hill, *Medals of Italian Artists of the Renaissance*, (London, 1912), p. 57.
9. Self-Portrait—Reverse, Portrait of his wife, Helena Marzupini (dated 1551): Armand, I, p. 158, 7; Heiss, VIII, p. 94, 3, Pl. XV, 4; Forrer, pp. 324, 5; Hill, *Medals of Italian Artists*, p. 59.
10. Bishop Paolo Giovio (dated 1552): Armand, I, p. 156, i; Heiss, VIII, p. 91, Pl. XIV, 2; Forrer, p. 326.
11. Gian Giacomo dei Medici, (Signed and dated 1555): Armand, I, p. 157, 4; Heiss, VIII, p. 93, Pl. XVI, 1; *Boll. di Num.*, IV (1906), p. 196.
12. Alessandro and Cosimo dei Medici (dated 1570): Armand, I, p. 157, 3; Heiss, VIII, p. 92, Pl. XV, 1; Forrer, p. 328; Habich, Pl. LVI, 2, 3.

The following three medals, not by Francesco da Sangallo, are occasionally attributed to him:

1. Leo X: Armand, I, p. 159, 10, III, p. 62; Heiss, VIII, p. 101; Forrer, p. 329.
2. Unknown Lady: Venturi, *Le Gallerie Italiane* IV (1899), p. 8; Venturi, *Storia . . . X*, pt. I (1935), fig. 199.
3. Clement VII, (Berlin, Simon Coll.): Bode, *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, (1903), p. 4.

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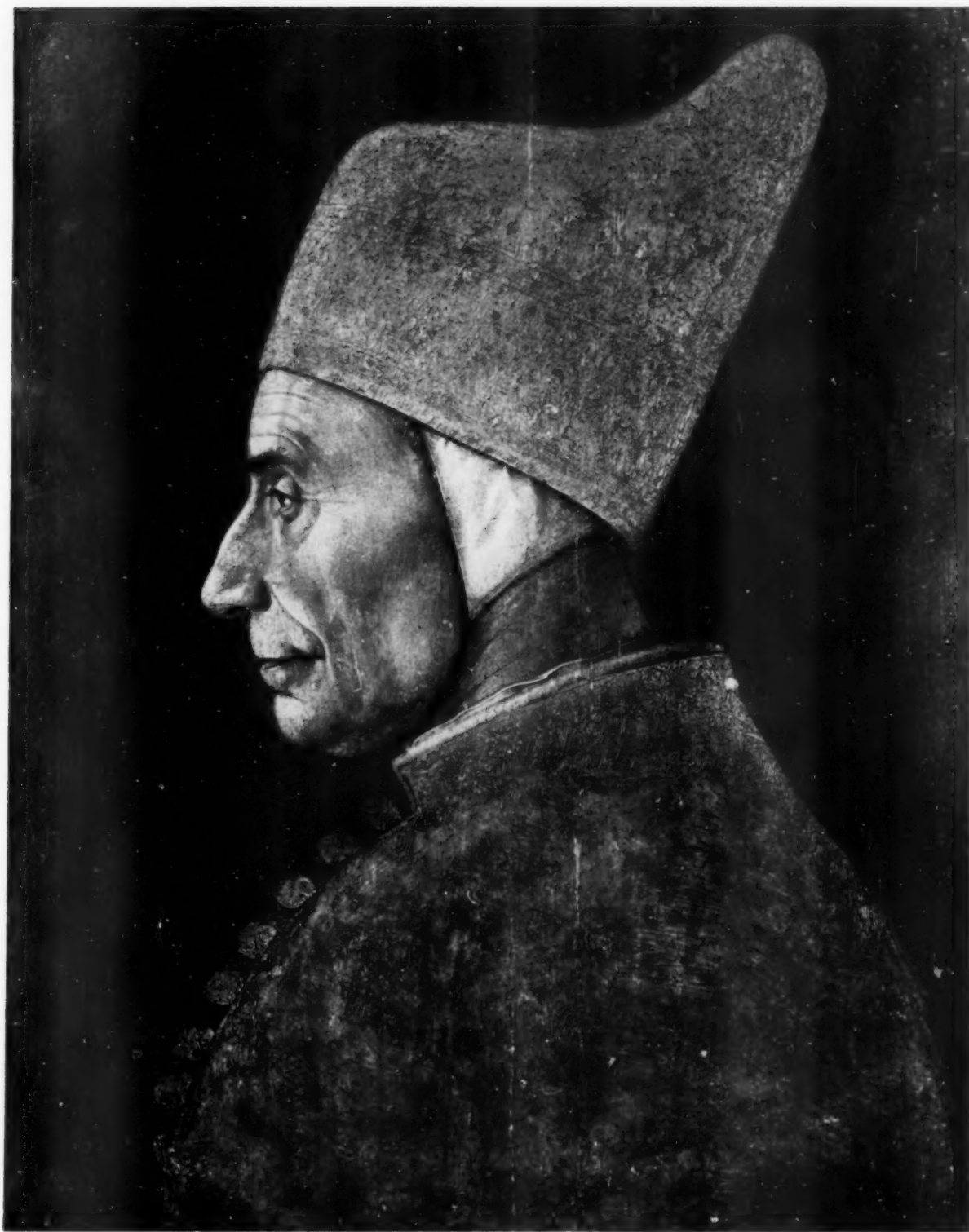
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